

## What You Need To Know About Bed Bugs



Public health officials and pest control operators across the country are responding to a significant increase in bed bug complaints. Although they are not known to transmit disease, bed bugs can cause a variety of physical and mental health concerns to anyone living with an infestation. They have been found in homes, apartments, office buildings, hospitals, businesses and even movie theaters. Economically, bed bugs can be a challenging and very expensive pest to control. The CDC and the USEPA have even declared that the bed bug is now a “*pest of significant public health importance*”.

### What are Bed Bugs?

- Bed bugs are small, flat, oval, reddish-brown, wingless insects that are approximately ¼ inch in length.
- They feed primarily at night on the blood of humans and other mammals.
- Bed bugs do not fly or jump, however, they can crawl very fast.
- Bed bugs are a re-emerging pest that may be found in hotels, apartments, dormitories, nursing homes, or any other places people gather.
- Anyone who comes in direct contact with bed bugs or their eggs can unknowingly carry them into their home or workplace.
- They are easily spread by moving beds, furniture, luggage, or clothing from one location to another.

### Do Bed Bugs transmit disease?

- Bed bugs are primarily a nuisance to humans and are not known to transmit disease.
- Bed bug infestations can cause severe psychological and emotional stress.
- Bites can cause welts which may become infected by excessive scratching.

### How do I know if I have Bed Bugs?

- Rusty-brown or black colored spots along the seams of a mattress or box spring are typically evidence of blood spots and fecal matter left by bed bugs.

- Check common areas where adult bed bugs prefer to hide, such as cracks, crevices, bed frames, baseboards, behind wall hangings and loose wallpaper, on upholstered furniture and drapery and around the seams and corners of mattresses and box springs. Bed Bugs prefer fabric, wood, and paper surfaces over plastic or metal.
- In heavy infestations, bed bugs can be found around and inside electrical outlets and in electronic devices, such as telephones, radios and televisions.



Bed bug fecal matter and “blood spots” are often found along seams of mattresses



Bed bugs and droppings can be seen around outlet covers in heavy infestations



Bed bugs prefer soft materials like upholstered furniture

### How can I get rid of Bed Bugs?

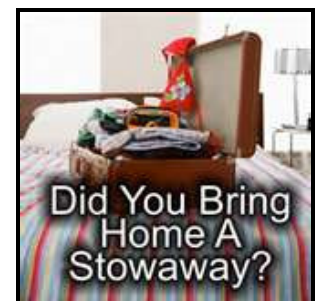
- Eliminate clutter throughout the dwelling reducing the number of bed bug hiding spots.
- Wash clothing and linens in hot water (>120 degrees Fahrenheit) and dry on a hot setting.
- Enclose infested mattress and box springs in a zippered cover that is labeled “allergen rated”, “for dust mites”, or “for bed bugs” for at least one full year.
- Vacuum the area thoroughly and discard contents in sealed trash bags.
- Pesticides labeled for use against bed bugs are available over the counter and may provide effective control. However, if the problem persists or if you’re dealing with a heavy infestation, it is recommended that you contact a licensed, professional pest control company to ensure effective treatment.
- Follow all recommended preparation guidelines provided by the pest control company prior to each treatment.
- Since, bed bugs are difficult to control, you should plan on several treatments to eliminate an infestation. An extensive heat treatment of the premises may be required to thoroughly control a widespread bed bug infestation.
- DO NOT USE “Bug Bombs”. They will typically kill only a small number of bed bugs and will often cause the insects to migrate into adjacent dwelling units.
- If you live in a rental unit and suspect an infestation, contact your management company or landlord to advise of the problem. Property owners should contact a professional pest control company. You can also contact the Cuyahoga County Board of Health at (216)201-2000 for assistance.



A zippered mattress cover can help protect against bed bugs

### How can I prevent Bed Bugs?

- Do not bring discarded bed frames, mattresses, box springs, or upholstered furniture into your home.
- Carefully inspect used or rented furniture prior to bringing it into your home.
- When traveling, inspect the bed and furniture upon arrival. Keep suitcases off the floor and bed, and inspect them before you leave. Wash and dry all clothing thoroughly when you return home.
- Caulk and seal any cracks and crevices throughout your home.



Inspect suitcases for signs of bed bugs when traveling