



ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

BED BUGS

PREVENTION & TREATMENT



Frequently Asked ?'s

WHAT ARE BED BUGS?

Bed bugs are small insects that feed on human blood. They are usually active at night when people are sleeping. Adult bed bugs have flat rusty-red-colored oval bodies and are about the size of an apple seed. Bed bugs have been shown to travel over 100 feet in a night but tend to live within 8 feet of where people sleep.

ARE BED BUGS DANGEROUS?

Although bed bugs and their bites are a nuisance, they are not known to spread diseases.

HOW DOES A HOME BECOME INFESTED WITH BED BUGS?

In most cases, people carry bed bugs into their homes unknowingly, in infested luggage, furniture, bedding, or clothing. Bed bugs may also travel between apartments through small crevices and cracks in walls and floors.

HOW CAN I KEEP BED BUGS OUT OF MY HOME?

Wash clothing and inspect luggage immediately after returning from a trip. Inspect used furniture for bed bugs before bringing it into your home. Never bring discarded bed frames, mattresses, box springs, or upholstered furniture into your home.

1 Prevent

Bed bugs can enter homes by latching onto used furniture, luggage and clothing, and by traveling along connecting pipes and wiring.

- Never bring bed frames, mattresses, box springs or upholstered furniture found on the street into your home.
- Check all used or rented furniture for bed bugs.
- When traveling, inspect the bed and furniture. Keep luggage off the floor and bed, and inspect them before you leave.
- Immediately wash and dry your clothing on hot settings or store it in a sealed plastic bag until you can if you suspected exposure.
- Seal cracks and crevices with caulk to help prevent bed bugs from coming in.

2 Inspect

Look for bed bugs, blood stains, droppings and eggs (a flashlight and a magnifying glass will help). Begin with the rooms you sleep in.

- Check mattresses, box springs, bed frames, and bedding.
- Check cracks and crevices in bedroom furniture, floor boards and baseboards, windows and door frames.
- Check walls and wall hangings including outlets, smoke detectors, pictures, and mirrors.
- Check the zippers, seams, tufts, and cushions of upholstered furniture.

Additionally, placing bed bug traps under the legs of beds and furniture will help in the timely detection of bed bugs.

3 Eliminate

Bed bug infestations require the services of licensed pest management professionals and often require multiple visits.

- Eliminate clutter to reduce hiding places. Consider putting non-essential items into storage during treatment. Inspect items before returning.
- Wash infested items with hot water and dry on the highest setting for at least 20 mins. Store in sealed bags until the infestation is eliminated.
- Vacuum all floors, furniture, cracks, and crevices daily.
- Enclose infested mattresses and box springs in a bed bug case for 1 year. Monitor for rips and tape them up.
- Dispose of heavily infested items using plastic and a sign that says "infested with bed bugs."



Questions?

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