



Baxter Pest Control Co., Inc.

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Bed Bugs

Most democratic is the bedbug chappie
Who prefers red blood to blue
And nothing makes him quite so happy
As sharing your blood with you!

This bug gets its common name from its close association with human sleeping beds where they often seek refuge during daylight, only to come out to feed on the bed's occupant(s) at night. The bed bug is an ectoparasite of primarily humans but will also attack poultry and other mammals and birds. Bed bugs have been a pest of man since ancient times and were introduced into the United States with the early colonials. It is found throughout the United States and the world.

FACTS:

- Characterized by piercing-sucking mouthparts.
- Man is the preferred host, but will feed on a variety of mammals.
- Their only food is the blood of warm-blooded animals.
- Have a very distinctive odor.

IDENTIFICATION:

- Adults are oval shaped, mahogany colored (reddish-brown after feeding).
- Have a flattened body, measuring about 3/16-inch long.

BIOLOGY:

- Simple metamorphosis: egg to nymph to adult.
- Nymphs go through 5 molts during a 35 - 48 day nymphal stage.
- Females lay 200 - 500 eggs in her lifetime, approximately 2 per day.
- Eggs are white in color and slightly curved.
- Eggs hatch in 6 to 17 days.
- Adults can live for up to 6 - 7 months, providing they have a food source.

HABITS:

- Normally feed at night.
- Once in the home, bed bugs become established in any convenient crack or crevice, particularly along the seams or in the buttons of mattresses, in the coils and frame of the boxspring, wooden bedsteads, bed framing, upholstered furniture, The backing of pictures, behind window and door molding/framing, behind wallpaper, between wooden floorboards, behind switch plates, conduit etc. In heavy infestations they may be found in wall voids, attics or other enclosed places.

They can be introduced into a structure via used furniture, mattresses, bedding etc., or from the belongings of someone who has been living in a bed bug infested situation.

They have also been found in transportation vehicles such as boats, trains, airplanes and busses as well as in movie theaters where they typically harbor in seats and their framing.

They have an obnoxious sweet odor and you may find the presence of small reddish-brown to black fecal deposits on the walls or other areas where they might congregate.

TREATMENT:

A thorough inspection is imperative. The key is finding and treating all hiding places. Because applications are made on beds and furniture, only insecticides labeled for bed bug control should be used. Great care should be taken when treating mattresses, box springs and upholstery to keep pesticide exposure to a minimum. Allow for thorough drying before re-use. Infant's and infirm person's bedding and bed frames should not be treated. They should be replaced with uninfested items.

In homes, most bed bug infestations can be controlled with a single application to mattresses, bed frames, baseboards, window/door framing, cracks/crevices, picture frames, edges of rugs, dressers, and any other suspected areas. In apartment buildings and hotels it's advisable to also inspect units to either side and above and below the infested unit and treat as needed.

In heavy infestations, bed bugs have been found on the ceiling. Pest management professionals have had to fumigate beds, furniture, furnishings, and in some severe cases; the entire structure, to eliminate heavy infestations of bed bugs. Bed bugs were quite common in the 50's and 60's but seemed to disappear. They were commonly treated with DDT which is no longer available and perhaps one factor why bed bugs have been growing in number in the late 90's.

Vacuuming and cleaning bedding and draperies, steam cleaning rugs and furnishings, and caulking cracks and crevices can help control bed bugs.

WHEN TREATING THE BED:

Do not treat the bed linens; they should be washed or dry-cleaned. Mattresses and box springs should be treated selectively, not covered with insecticide. You want the insecticide to contact the bed bugs, not the people. Concentrate your efforts on tufts, folds, buttons, and edges where bed bugs could hide.

When possible, treat inside box springs, around the springs and coils. You will be more effective if you can take apart the bed frame and treat inside any hollow framework, cracks, and crevices. Again, the mattress should be thoroughly dried and if possible covered with a plastic mattress cover before use.

SEE ALSO:

Bat Bugs are a cousin to the Bed Bug and look identical to the naked eye. Under a microscope you can tell the difference by looking at the length of the hairs on the shoulder in relation to the width of the eye. Either pest can be a problem in your bed, however you probably won't solve a bat bug problem without solving your bat problem.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

Call Baxter Pest Control immediately. We can be reached at (215) 844- 6646 24 hours a day.