



# Exterminators, Inc.

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 Serving all areas of New Jersey 1-800-564-6368

## Bed Bug Information & Fact Sheet

### Where did they come from?

Scientists believe that bed bugs have followed us from the cave to the tent to the house. In fact, bed bugs have been around for centuries. Documentation from the 17<sup>th</sup> century spoke about infestations of bed bugs.

In the United States, bed bugs were very common until about World War II. Many feel that a decrease in infestations occurred with the introduction of such pesticides as DDT, but DDT was banned in 1972 because of its negative impact on our environment.

It was not until the last decade that reported cases gave an indication of a possible rise in bed bug infestations. Today there is a new generation of professionals who have never had to deal with a bed bug infestation before.

No one knows why there is a continuing rise in bed bug infestations, but there are several theories:

- Increased international travel especially to exotic places. Bed Bugs travel with people, sometimes in luggage.
- The DDT ban of 1972
- Unfamiliarity with the pest.



### So What is a bed bug?

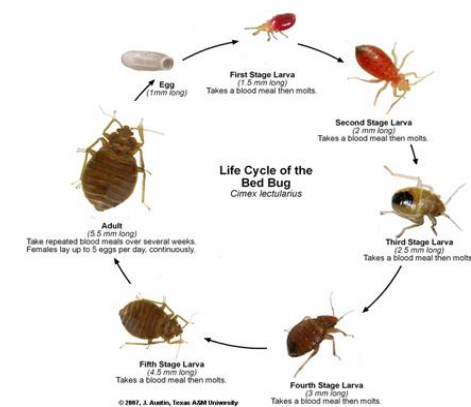
Simply put, a bed bug is a small insect that feeds on the blood of mammals and sometimes birds. They range from straw colored to a reddish brown, they are wingless insects with an oval shaped body. Adults are about 1/4" long and flat which is why they can fit into narrow crevices.

Bed bugs are attracted to carbon dioxide and body heat but **not** to odors. Bed bugs are opportunistic. Bed Bugs have been found from the finest hotels to the most modest accommodations. Bed bugs do not recognize "clean" or "dirty", and their presence is not a reflection on the persons or places where they live.

They are prolific breeders. They are able to "repopulate" and re-infest a room in as little as 3 months. They are easy to see with the naked eye, but difficult to find when they are hiding.

Bed bugs feed through two hollow tubes that pierce the skin, similar to a mosquito. But an irritation or bite experience in bed may not **necessarily** be due to bed bugs.

A bed bug's lifespan is 10 months to a year. Because



they live indoors, bed bugs can breed all year long. During a female's lifespan, depending on temperature and food, she may lay 200-400 eggs. Eggs hatch in

about 10 days.

Young reach adulthood in 5-8 weeks. Bed bugs will shed their skin five times before reaching adulthood. Young bugs must take a blood meal in order to shed their skins and grow.

Bed bugs prefer to feed on humans. Pets such as dogs and cats are **not** a major host. Bed bugs feed for about 5-10 minutes, then crawl to a secluded area where they will digest their meal for several days. But most importantly, **Bed bug bites are not known to spread disease!**

Because individuals reactions to bites vary, people in the household may have different opinions about how "bad" the infestation is, or whether there is an infestation at all. But bed bugs are a nuisance and do cause stress and sleeplessness.

Because bed bugs are active at night, early stages of an infestation may not be recognized immediately. You may see small bloodstains from crushed bugs, dark spots from bed bug droppings, welts or marks on the body, or the bugs themselves.



#### **Where should I look for them?**

Bed bugs often hide in or near beds or bedroom furniture, in the tufts, seams, or folds of the mattress. In more severe infestations, bugs may spread to the cracks and crevices in bed frames, behind headboards, inside nightstands, behind baseboards, behind casings/moldings, pictures, loosened wallpaper, etc.

In severe infestations bugs may also be found in other areas of the home. Bugs may also hide in piles of books, papers, boxes, couches, clothing and other clutter near the sleeping area.

#### **What should I do about them?**

**The tenant(s) or affected person(s) are the ones who must perform the bulk of work required to successfully address a bed bug problem.** Elimination requires cooperation between the homeowner or owner of the building, the occupants, and a licensed pest control operator. **Spraying pesticides alone will absolutely NOT solve the problem.**

Treatment and removal of infested furniture and mattresses may be necessary. Wash all bedding, draperies and clothing in hot water. Dry in a hot dryer. Bed bugs will die at temperatures of over 140 degrees. Check clothing in stored areas for bugs.

Vacuum carpets and furniture. Vacuum the floor/wall junctions of the rooms to remove potential debris and material which would prevent the pesticides for reaching into the voids. Frequent vacuuming removes numbers of bugs. Cleaning objects removes eggs which are glued in crevices.

Wipe away or vacuum all dust from the bed frame, nearby furniture, floors and carpets. Seal the vacuum bag in plastic and dispose in an outside dumpster or garbage can. Vacuum every day or two until the bugs are gone. But remember, Bed bugs can be distributed to other sites by the equipment used to remove them.

When possible, the vacuum should be bagged and used only for the purpose of removing bugs.

Find and clear the areas where bed bugs hide. Remove clutter from the bedrooms and any other furniture that people may sleep or nap on. Place the clutter into a garbage bag and seal it tightly. If you need to save it, either clean the items with bleach, rubbing alcohol, or in temperatures higher than 140 degrees or make sure it stays sealed for a year.

Mattresses that are damaged or ripped should be replaced. Most mattresses can be treated and should be encased in a "bed bug mattress cover" after the treatment, and remain covered until the bed bugs are eradicated. Bed bugs can live for up to a year without a food supply.

The bugs may be present in the Box Spring. The box spring should be thoroughly inspected and either treated or replaced as necessary.

DO NOT have the mattresses treated with residual insecticides.



**Pesticides should only be used by a Pest Control Operator licensed by the NJDEP.**

#### **After Treatment**

After treatment, make your bed an "Island". Move the bed away from the wall. Don't let the linens, bed skirt or blankets touch the floor. This will make it harder for the bed bugs to crawl into the bed. Bed bugs crawl into the bed. Bed bugs cannot fly or jump. Complete control is rarely achieved with the first treatment. It is completely normal to still see the bugs after the first or even the first couple of treatments. Treatments should be done every two weeks until the infestation is eradicated.

Some problems can be prevented by washing clothing and bedding immediately after returning from a trip and inspecting luggage thoroughly. Inspect all used furniture and bedding before you bring it into your home.

**NEVER bring discarded bed frames, mattresses, box springs or upholstered furniture into your home!**

**E&G Exterminators, Inc.**

**1-800-564-6368**