

Don't Let the Bed Bugs Bite

Let's face it, bugs freak everybody!

Bed bugs are a problem in all cases. They are a threat to the health of both caregiver and clients. It is important to identify bed bug infestation early before the infestation becomes established and/or spreads. Treating a minor infestation is far less costly and easier than treating the same infestation after it becomes more widespread.

Misidentifying a bed bug infestation gives the bugs more time to spread to other areas of the home or 'hitch hike' a ride to someone else's home to start a new infestation.

Identifying Evidence of Bed Bugs

Bites on the skin, rashes or other skin conditions are poor indicators of bed bugs infestation since bites can be from other insects (such as mosquitoes or chiggers), rashes on the skin could be an indication of eczema or fungal infections or even hives.

Additionally, some people do not react to bed bug bites at all.

Looking for Signs

When cleaning, look for physical signs of bed bugs:

- Rusty, reddish stains on bed sheets or mattresses caused by bed bugs being crushed
- Dark spots which are bed bug excrement and may 'bleed' onto the fabric like a marker would
- Eggs or eggshells which are tiny, pale yellow skins that nymphs shed as they grow bigger
- Live bed bugs

Finding the Hiding Spots

When the bed bugs are not feeding, they hide:

- Around the bed, near the piping, seams, and tags of the mattress and box springs
- In cracks on the bed frame and headboard
- In the seams of chairs and couches between cushions and folds of curtains
- In drawer joints
- In electrical receptacles and appliances
- Under loose wall paper and wall hangings
- At the junction where the wall meets the ceiling
- Common bed bugs are found almost anywhere their host can live

Bed Bug Behavior

Understanding the behavior of the bed bug will help you to find an infestation and to monitor for their presence after treatment has been completed. Bed bug behavior includes:

- Feeding on humans, other mammals, and birds
- Able to travel 5-20 feet from their hiding places to feed usually during the night but will feed during the day if hungry usually taking 3-12 minutes to feed.
- Bed bugs die when their body temperatures go below 46°F and above 113° F

Extermination

To kill bed bugs with heat, the room must be even hotter than 113° to ensure sustained heat reaches the bugs no matter where they are hiding, or by chemical extermination usually provided by a professional service.