



## BED BUGS

All members of the bed bug family feed on the blood of mammals and birds. The bed bug feeds on humans, while other species attack bats, pigeons and rodents. Bed bugs are typically active and feed at night, although not strictly nocturnal. When inactive, bed bugs hide in cracks, crevices and seams in walls, floors, beds, and furniture. When only a few bed bugs are present, they live close to human sleeping areas; when numerous, they can be found in many rooms of the house. A characteristic “bed bug odor” is frequently present in a home infested with bed bugs which is said to smell similar to rotting raspberries.



Bed bugs are oval, chestnut-brown to red in color and flattened from top to bottom (unless engorged after feeding). Adults measure approximately ¼ inch in length. Nymphs, or young bed bugs, look very similar to adults but are smaller and are not sexually mature. Bed bugs grow by molting-shedding their outer layer after feeding-and do so in five different stages. Adult bed bugs feed once per week on average. After mating, female bed bugs deposit their eggs in their resting places. One female will produce close to 350 eggs during her lifespan.

Bed bugs can infest in dwellings in a variety of ways, such as:

- Bed bugs and eggs inadvertently brought in from other infested dwellings on a visiting person's clothing or luggage;
- Infested items (such as furniture, clothing, or backpacks) brought in;
- Nearby dwellings or infested items, if easy routes are available for travel (through duct work or false ceilings);
- People visiting an infested area (apartment, subway, movie theatre, or hotel) and carrying the bed bugs to another area on their clothing, luggage, or bodies;
- Less commonly, bats, birds or rodents that may harbor bed bugs or bat bugs.

The bite from a bed bug can produce irritating, itching, and burning sensations as an allergic reaction to the protein found in its saliva. A colorless lump develops at the bite location in contrast to the bite from a flea, which would have a reddish center. Discomfort may last a week or more. Occasional bites generally indicate a beginning light infestation of adults; many bites result from a heavy, long-standing population of nymphs and adults.

In the unfortunate case of a bed bug infestation, it is our recommendation to have your entire dwelling thoroughly treated including all cracks and crevices of dressers, wooden bed frames and headboards, door and window trim, baseboards, and similar sites. Tuft and seam areas of all mattresses, box springs and other fabric furniture should also be treated. In addition, wall receptacle plates should be removed and treated with a dust to help control the spread of bed bugs. We highly recommend installing encasements on **ALL** mattresses and box springs as well.

Please ask about our pre-treatment checklists for more specific information and guidelines.