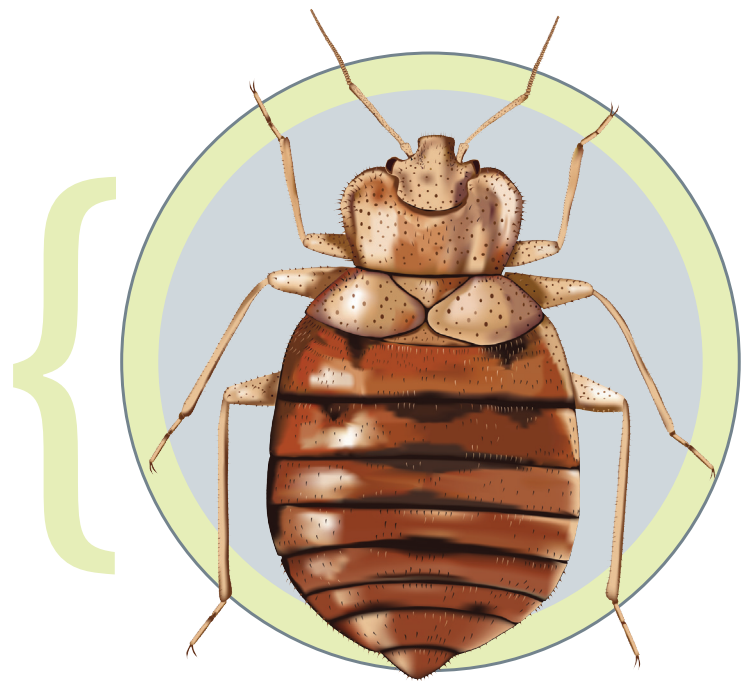


In recent years Ontario and other Canadian provinces and territories have seen an increase in the number of bed bug reports. It is possible for anyone, anywhere to experience a bed bug infestation. Bed bugs are small biting insects that multiply quickly and travel easily. Bed bugs can be prevented and controlled. The sooner everyone responds, the more successful we will be at controlling this pest.



PREVENT

HOW DO I PREVENT BED BUGS FROM ENTERING MY APARTMENT OR HOME?

Although even the cleanest homes and hotels can have bed bugs, regular inspection and house cleaning, including vacuuming your mattress, can help prevent or discover an infestation in its early stages. Clean up clutter to help reduce the number of places bed bugs can hide and to make inspection easier. Seal cracks and crevices with caulking, even if you don't have bed bugs. This will help prevent bed bugs and other pests from entering your home or apartment.

Be careful when buying used furniture or clothes. Make sure to inspect the used item, and feel free to ask if the items were checked for bed bugs. Never bring discarded bed frames, mattresses, box springs, upholstered furniture or electronics into your home. These items may be infested with bed bugs.

HOW DO I KEEP FROM BRINGING THEM HOME WHEN I TRAVEL?

When travelling, inspect the room and furniture and look for blood spots, droppings or live insects. Request a different room if you find evidence of bed bugs. Inspect luggage when you return home, preferably before you bring your luggage into the house, and wash clothing in the hottest water possible followed by 30 minutes in a hot dryer immediately after returning from a trip.

IDENTIFY

WHAT ARE BED BUGS?

Bed bugs are insects with oval-shaped bodies and no wings. Bed bugs usually bite at night and will bite all over, especially around the face, neck, upper torso, arms and hands. There are currently no known cases of infectious disease transmitted to people by bed bug bites.

HOW CAN I FIND THEM?

Use a bright flashlight to look for bed bugs or their dark droppings in bedroom furniture, windows and doorframes. Or use a hot hair dryer, a thin knife or an old playing card to force them out of hiding spaces and cracks.



Check:

- behind your headboard and around cracks and crevices of your bed.
- in the seams and tufts of your mattress.
- inside the box spring and along the bed frame.
- along bedroom baseboard cracks.
- in and around nightstands.
- other bedroom items, including window and door casings, pictures, mouldings, nearby furniture, loose wallpaper, cracks in plaster and partitions and clutter.



WHAT DOES A BED BUG BITE FEEL AND LOOK LIKE?

Most bed bug bites are initially painless, but could turn into large, itchy skin welts. Some people have no reaction at all. Most bed bug bites eventually go away by themselves and don't need treatment.



ACT

WHAT CAN I DO IF I HAVE BED BUGS IN MY APARTMENT OR HOME?

Consult with your landlord, building manager, local Public Health Unit or a pest control professional to confirm that you have bed bugs.

Use a nozzle attachment on the vacuum to remove live adult bed bugs and immature bed bugs (called nymphs) and their eggs.

Vacuum all crevices on your mattress, bed frame, baseboards and any objects close to the bed. It is essential to vacuum daily and empty the vacuum bag immediately or seal it and place it in the freezer for several days. Wash all your clothing, bed sheets, blankets, mattress pads, pillows and their cases in the hottest water possible and place them in a hot dryer for 30 minutes. Consider covering your pillows and mattress with a plastic cover.

Remove all unnecessary clutter. Seal cracks and crevices between baseboards, on wood bed frames, floors and walls with caulking.

Repair or remove peeling wallpaper, tighten loose light switch covers, and seal any openings where pipes, wires or other utilities come into your home (pay special attention to walls that are shared between apartments). Dispose of infested items that cannot be cleaned and get rid of clutter. Seal all items tightly in a plastic garbage bag and discard in a clearly labelled outside container.

SHOULD I USE A PEST CONTROL COMPANY?

Bed bug control requires an integrated pest management (IPM) approach that includes proper preparation and inspection, identification and housekeeping. This will ensure the risk of pesticide exposure is minimized, the environment is protected, and the effectiveness of the treatment is maximized.

Getting rid of bed bug infestations usually requires the use of pesticides. Only professionals should apply pesticides for bed bugs. Foggers and bug bombs are not effective against them. There are many licensed pest control companies in Ontario who have the proper training and experience to manage a bed bug infestation. To find a licensed company near you go to:

www.spmao.ca

www.pestworld.org