



BED BUGS

- Are you being bitten in bed?
- Do you have welts on your arms shoulders and back?
- Do you travel regularly, interstate or internationally?
- Do you stay in motels, backpackers or accommodation premises?

You could have Bed Bugs.



Bed bugs are small non-flying insects with a flat oval shape about the size of an apple pip. Their flattened body allows them to squeeze into small cracks and crevices and as a result they can be hard to detect and eradicate. They are blood-sucking insects that require blood for nutrition and development. Bed bugs feed mostly at night when the host is asleep. Bites cause small, hard, swollen welts on the skin that may become inflamed and itch severely.

There are five juvenile stages leading to the adult bed bug. Adults are about 6mm long, reddish-brown in color with the juveniles (nymphs) a similar

shape but lighter in color but smaller. Eggs are about 1mm in length, white to cream colored and under magnification pear-shaped. They are well concealed and not always obvious.

Habits

Bed bugs prefer to hide in cracks and crevices during the daytime and come out to feed at night. The blood meal requires three to five minutes and usually goes unnoticed by the victim. After feeding, the bite site may become inflamed and itch severely in sensitive people. In extreme cases there may be a severe allergic reaction requiring urgent medical treatment. Typical hiding places are in the tufts, folds and seams of mattresses, and cracks in the timbers, the bed head and slats of the bed frame. Harborage is not limited to these areas and in all cases all cracks and crevices need to be inspected. This includes carpet edges, picture frames, curtain folds, electrical fittings, wardrobes and any area into which they can squeeze.

The cryptic nature of bed bugs and their ability to hide in small spaces means that they will be protected from pesticides unless it is applied thoroughly and correctly. Eggs are not affected at all by pesticides. Both characteristics have significant implications for treatment. However Exopest can use Cryonite (a dry ice), that can eliminate all stages.

Signs of bed bug Infestation

- Blood spots on the bedding, walls and furniture.
- Skin welts and irritation caused by the bites.
- Sweet musty smell (less noticeable except in extreme cases or up close)
- Shedding skins and faeces.

The most commonly affected areas of the body are the arms and shoulders. Reactions to the bites may be delayed; up to 9 days before lesions appear. Common allergic reactions include the development of large wheals, often >1cm, which are accompanied by itching and inflammation.



Management

Control of bed bugs requires the cooperation of the owner of the infested premises, along with the Exopest pest manager. If an owner suspects a bed bug infestation they should first ensure there is no chance of spreading the problem. Bed bugs are great hitchhikers so do not spread the infestation by moving bedding, furniture etc into another room. In extreme cases it may be necessary to isolate all equipment and materials that come into contact with the infested room. Even minor infestations from a chance transfer can become a major problem.

The treatment will usually involve a 3-step process

- Inspection
- Treatment
- Follow Up

Inspection

The first essential step in pest management is identification of the pest and determination of the extent and level of the infestation. When this is known the Exopest can assess the treatment options and their duration. After inspection and before treatment, a wash down of surfaces affected with blood spotting not only improves the appearance but also allows a follow up inspection to be done with greater confidence. In extreme cases it may be better to discard the mattress - burning or tipping is recommended, again ensuring that other items do not become infested. Care must be taken when moving affected items, sealing them in plastic bags before they leave the room is recommended. Bed linen should be washed in hot water followed by a hot drier. Sensitive materials can be placed in a freezer allowing enough time for the entire volume of the item to reach the temperature of the freezer.

Treatment

Chemical

The treatment involves either the direct use of pesticides to harborage such as mattress base, slats, carpet edges, tack board below carpet , cracks & crevices, wardrobes and cupboards.

Follow Up

The premises would then need to be quarantined for 7-10days until a follow up could declare that infestation dead. Reapplication would be necessary if live bedbugs were found on this visit and a further 7-10days quarantine of those rooms and a final follow up inspection.

Latest technique

Cryonite



The alternative is Exopest can use the latest products such as Cryonite (a dry ice) which literally freeze insects to death. The advantage is it kills all stages including eggs and adults at the time of treatment. Cryonite is safe and kind to the environment allowing you to occupy that room almost immediately resulting in little inconvenience or loss of revenue in commercial situations. Whilst the bed linen and any likely infested clothing should be bagged and removed for cleaning, the mattress, electrical appliances, computers and sensitive items can be treated directly without damaging them.

Follow up

It is still recommended in 7-10days at which time a chemical can be applied as precautionary process to future harbourages.

IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT A QUICK INSPECTION AND ONE TREATMENT WILL BE SUCCESSFUL - DON'T WASTE YOUR MONEY AND RISK BEING FURTHER DISTRESSED BY ACCEPTING "CHEAP" REMEDIES.

After care

Commercial situations require training of cleaning staff so identification of bedbugs is quick and rooms can be isolated so the spread of infestation is limited. Exopest can provide this training with our highly qualified staff. Regular inspection of the high-risk situations is recommended, particularly in the Hospitality and Accommodation industry.

Domestic situations it is suggested if traveling frequently then check the mattresses regularly or invest in a mattress cover, which will help eliminate the most common harborage.