Bed Bug Treatment Preparation

Before the treatment begins, all occupants, including pets, must leave the unit and not enter for a minimum of –three to four hours after the technician arrives. Aquariums may remain in place as long as the filtration and aeration systems are turned off and the tank is adequately covered. Filtration and aeration equipment should be turned back on six hours after treatment. Anyone who is pregnant or has allergies or asthma should consult their doctor.

Before treatment:

- all clutter should be removed from the unit

☐ vacuum any carpeting and furnishings

☐ vacuum the mattress thoroughly including the crevices, handles and buttons

☐ vacuum the bed frame, baseboards and objects or flooring close to bed

☐ discard the vacuum bag in a tightly sealed garbage bag

☐ remove all clothing from dressers and place in clean plastic bags or plastic totes

☐ bookshelves, nightstands or other furniture in the immediate area must be emptied so the technician can treat the underside of furniture

Laundering

All clothing items should be placed in garbage bags, sealed and emptied directly into the washing machine. It is important to launder items using hot water, as cold water will not kill bed bugs or their eggs. When the laundering cycle is complete, the clean laundry should be placed in new clear garbage bags and sealed during the treatment process. The garbage bags used for transporting clothing to the laundry room should be discarded outside of the premise, as they may contain bed bugs. If possible, for severe infestations, water-soluble bags should be used to collect sheets and clothing and put directly into the wash. All clean clothes should be put in the dryer on high for a minimum of 20 minutes. Some clothing may require dry cleaning.

Beds

All bedding must be removed before the technician arrives. Soiled bedding should be washed in hot water, separate from other laundry, or dry-cleaned before or soon after the treatment to avoid a resurgence of bed bugs. Pillows should also be placed in the dryer on high heat for a minimum of 20 minutes. After treatment, bedding should be tucked in tightly, and the bed kept a 6 inches away from the wall. Bed skirts should not be used.

Baby cribs

All linen should be laundered. All toys should be washed in soapy, hot water and stuffed toys should be placed in the dryer on high heat for 20 minutes.

Dressers and night tables

All contents of dressers are to be placed in garbage bags and placed in the dryer cycle on hot for a minimum of 20 minutes. All articles on top of the dresser are to be removed and placed in plastic bags or plastic totes. Bookshelves, nightstands or other furniture in the immediate area must be emptied so that the technician can treat the undersides of the furniture. Furniture and items should be moved at least   (12 inches) away from the walls to facilitate treatment of   the baseboards. Shelving and drawers should be clean.

Closets

All closets including linen closets are to be emptied. Clean articles should be placed in the dryer on high heat for a minimum of 20 minutes. All soiled articles need to be washed in hot water and then dried at high heat. Laundromat dryers may have lower heat settings and may not heat up to 120 F, so a full cycle should be used.

Sofas and chairs

All chair covers, throws and pillows must be laundered prior to treatment.

Disposal of furniture

Discarding beds, bedding and furniture is NOT a sound approach to bed bug control as new items can easily be re-infested. Furniture infested with bed bugs that cannot be salvaged needs to be disposed of in a manner that will prevent the further spread of the bugs. In the process of removing a piece of furniture, bed bugs can escape into hallways and make their way into new rooms or apartments, spreading the problem to new areas.

If you decide to throw out bed bug infested furniture:

- take apart or damage the piece of furniture to ensure it cannot be reused, then wrap the furniture in plastic so bed bugs cannot escape—this should be done in the unit or home before it is removed

☐ a mattress should be slashed or otherwise damaged to make it unusable, then wrapped in plastic so bed bugs cannot escape—this should be done in the unit or home before it is removed

☐ put items in the trash shortly before pick-up, so they do not sit at the curb for a long time

Myths and Facts about Bed Bugs

Myth: Bed bugs are too small to see.

Fact: Although they may be difficult to find because they hide well, bed bugs are big enough to see with the naked eye. Bed bugs look similar to an apple seed in size and appearance.

Myth: Bed bugs are only found in homeless shelters; only poor or dirty people get them.

Fact: Bed bugs can be found in hotels, motels, dormitories, apartments, condos, private homes and even in some public places, such as businesses and offices. Anyone can get bed bugs.

Myth: Walking into a room that has bed bugs means you will get bed bugs.
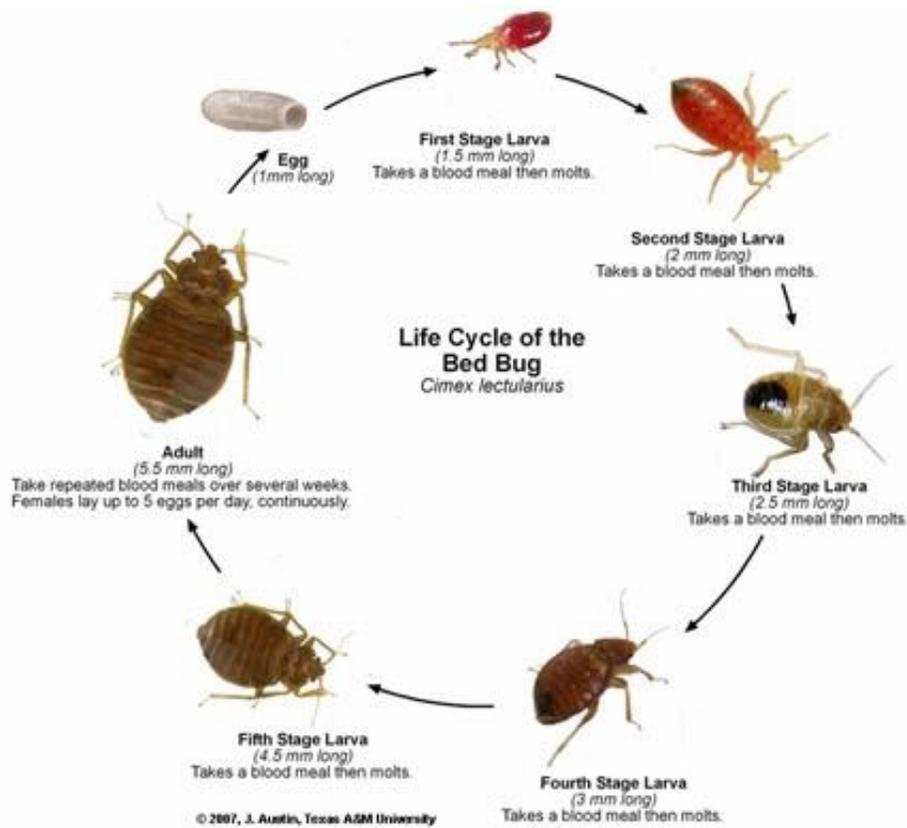
Fact: Bed bugs do not jump. They spend 90 per cent of their time hiding and are usually active at night. Bed bugs avoid light and do not like to be disturbed.
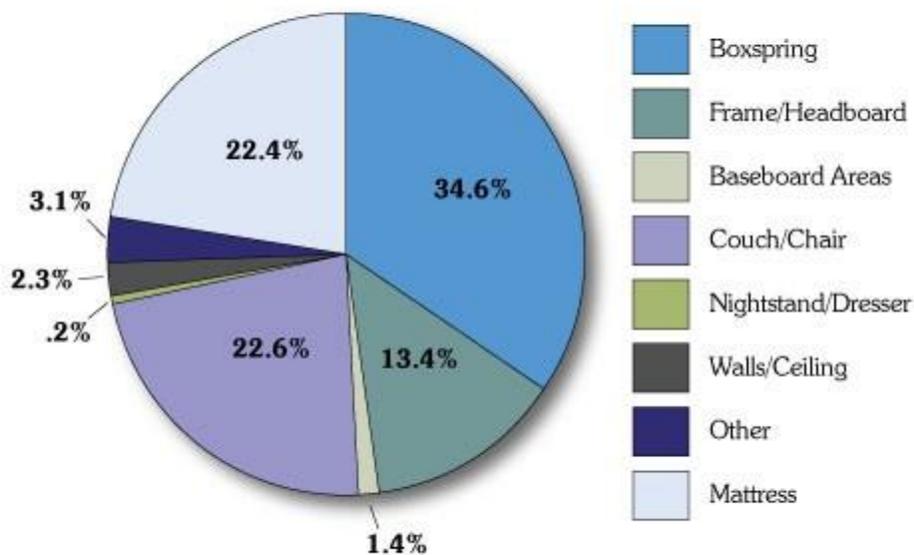
Myth: Bed bugs cause disease.

Fact: Bed bugs are not considered a health hazard and do not transmit disease. Bed bug bites, however, can cause an allergic reac-tion similar to a mosquito bite in some people. Frequent scratching of the bite marks or picking the scabs can cause infections. Peo-ple who experience severe and/or repeated infestations can feel anxious, worried or ashamed.

Myth: Chemicals or pesticides will kill bed bugs.

Fact: Pesticide application alone will not kill bed bugs at all stages of their lifecycle. Successful treatment depends on an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to bed bug control. IPM involves vacuuming, inspection and laundering belongings, sealing cracks and gaps where bed bugs can hide, as well as the use of chemicals. Do not use over-the-counter pest control products or home remedies such as kerosene.

Life Cycle of the
Bed Bug
Cimex lectularius

Egg
(1mm long)

First Stage Larva
(1.5 mm long)
Takes a blood meal then molts.

Second Stage Larva
(2 mm long)
Takes a blood meal then molts.

Third Stage Larva
(2.5 mm long)
Takes a blood meal then molts.

Fourth Stage Larva
(3 mm long)
Takes a blood meal then molts.

Fifth Stage Larva
(4.5 mm long)
Takes a blood meal then molts.

Adult
(5.5 mm long)
Take repeated blood meals over several weeks.
Females lay up to 5 eggs per day, continuously.

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BED BUG HIDING SPOTS

22.4%
3.1%
2.3%
.2%
22.6%
1.4%
13.4%
34.6%

- Boxspring
- Frame/Headboard
- Baseboard Areas
- Couch/Chair
- Nightstand/Dresser
- Walls/Ceiling
- Other
- Mattress

Distribution of bed bugs found in 13 infested apartments
Source: University of Kentucky