

Bed Bug Information Package  
By  
Housing Help Centre

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## What are bed bugs?

Bed bugs are parasites that feed on blood. An adult bed bug is approximately the size of an apple seed and is reddish brown in colour. A bed bug egg is approximately the size of a pin head, is white in colour and looks like a grain of rice.

Bed bugs are attracted to the smell of carbon dioxide and blood. How clean or dirty a person is does not make a difference to a bed bug. However, the more clutter there is in a home, the more hiding spots there are for bed bugs. This means that if a person with a lot of clutter has an infestation, it could be more difficult to rid the home of bed bugs as there are more spots for them to hide and nest.

Bed bugs typically will not feed off a pet, however it is possible for it to happen. The reason why they do not feed off pets is because bed bugs are flat in shape. This makes it difficult for them to travel through the hair of pets and animals. Bed bugs will feed off pets for a number of reasons though. Some of these reasons include, but are not limited to,

- there is a high infestation of bed bugs in the home
- they are unable to find their way back to a human host
- there are numerous pets in the home
- the pet sleeps where the main infestation is

Bed bugs are not known to carry diseases. There have been no reports of bed bugs transmitting diseases to humans.

Bed bugs go through five different life stages before becoming an adult. They need to feed between each stage in order to progress to the next stage. Only adult bed bugs can reproduce. When a home is being treated there are at minimum two chemical treatments that occur. This is because the chemicals do not kill bed bug eggs. The pest control company will do the first spray followed by the second spray two weeks later. In this two-week time period, the eggs will hatch. As such, it is normal to see activity between the treatments. The second treatment, which occurs two weeks after the first treatment, stops the new bed bugs from reaching adulthood and therefore stops them from being able to reproduce.



## Why are bed bugs back?

The truth is bed bugs never left; there was simply a drastic decrease in the number of bed bugs. A resurgence of bed bugs is occurring for several different reasons. One of the main reasons is the ban of DDT which was banned after it was discovered that people were having health issues that were being caused by DDT. Although the chemicals that are used today are effective in the treatment of bed bugs, the overuse has caused bed bugs to become resistant to them.



As such, we are starting to see super bed bugs emerging. Due to these super bugs, researchers are looking for new effective ways to treat for bed bugs. Aprehend is one of these new treatments. It is a natural biopesticide and has been approved in the UK as well as many States. It is hoped that the product will be approved in 2020 in Canada. It has been proven to be very effective in the treatment of bed bugs,

when paired with other tools in the bed bug treatment toolbox.

Bed bugs have also had a resurgence due to a higher population of people. There are now a greater number of people living in the same space that existed 30 years ago. There has been an increase in travel as well, which also plays a role. Travel has not only increased nationally but also internationally. Bed bugs can hitchhike on luggage. This increases the risk to everyone who travels of bringing bed bugs home with them.

There are also two other main contributing factors to the continued rise of bed bugs. The first is a lack of awareness. Many people still believe that bed bugs are not real and that the old saying “sleep tight, don’t let the bed bugs bite” is simply an old folk tale. To assist with this, continued education and information needs to be shared with people. Second, there continues to be a stigma attached to bed bugs. Due to misinformation, lack of knowledge and ignorance there continues to be a blame and shame culture around bed bugs. The attached stigma often prevents people from reporting that they have bed bugs, preventing treatment to occur and only increasing the spread of bed bugs. As more people learn about bed bugs, how to prevent them and what to do if they have them, the no blame, no shame culture is on the rise as it becomes more established.

## How do I prevent getting bed bugs?

There are many different steps a person can take to prevent getting bed bugs. The first is to be aware. Educate yourself on what bed bugs are, what they look like and what are different ways you can bring home bed bugs. The more aware a person is, the better chance they have of not bringing bed bugs home. If they do, they have a better chance of keeping the infestation to a minimum and quickly ridding the home of the bed bugs.

Other ways to avoid getting bed bugs include:

- Do not bring home second-hand furniture. This includes furniture off the side of the road, from second-hand stores or from friends/family/professionals. A person can have bed bugs and not know they have them. By bringing second-hand furniture into your home you are increasing your risk of bringing bed bugs into your home.
- Keep your home clutter free. Bed bugs will hide in any crack or crevice they can find. The more clutter free a home is, the less hiding places there are for bed bugs. This will assist with keeping any possible infestation to a minimum and create a greater chance of treatment being successful.
- Use mattress encasements (one for each mattress and boxspring), moats/inceptors and volcanos. These are all preventative measures that can be taken to protect furniture and be used as a detection device.
- Make your bed an island. Keep your bed 6 inches away from the wall. This will assist in the reduction of bed bugs being able to crawl up the wall and onto the bed, or out of the bed onto the wall and into different areas of the home.
- Keep your blankets, pillows, stuffed animals and clothes off the floor. The less items on the floor the lower the chance of transferring bed bugs to different areas of the home.
- If you have been somewhere and you believe that you may have picked up bed bugs, change your clothes immediately upon entering your home. Put the potentially infested clothes in the dryer on high heat for at least 60 minutes. The best practice is to keep a change of clothes either by the front door or in the bathroom. Changing in the tub is a great way to trap any possible bed bugs in one area.

## Myths Vs. Facts

Myth	Fact
Only dirty people get bed bugs.	Bed bugs are attracted to carbon dioxide and blood, the cleanliness of a person does not matter.
Bed bugs can jump and fly.	Bed bugs do not jump or fly, they can only crawl
I don't have bites, so I don't have bed bugs.	About 50% of the population does not react to bed bug bites.
I need to throw out all my clothes, my bed and my couch.	Clothes can be laundered. Beds and couches can be treated by the treatment company.
Bed bugs are only found on the bed.	Bed bugs are found where people spend the majority of their time.
Bed bugs cannot live if they do not feed.	Bed bugs can live up to a year without feeding.
Bed bugs cause the spread of disease.	There is no known documentation of bed bugs spreading disease.
Bed bugs cannot be seen by the naked eye.	Bed bugs can easily be seen by the naked eye.
Bed bugs are only active and bite at night.	Bed bugs are active all times of the day and will bite any time during the day.
Bed bugs can be treated with store bought products.	These products are not effective. The best way to treat is to have a reputable treatment company treat the home.

# Integrated Pest Management

## What is Integrated Pest Management?

Integrated Pest Management or IPM is a planned approach to prevent and address bed bugs. There are numerous factors that play a role in a successful IPM. The three main factors are the landlord, tenant and pest control company. It is very important for all three parties to work together for the success of an IPM. Successful IPMs also include the use of regular unit inspections (at minimum two times a year), assisting tenants with prep if there is knowledge that they are struggling, not blaming or shaming people for having bed bugs and bed bug detectors e.g. moats, inceptors, volcanos. Block treatments have been proven as a successful measure in decreasing the spread of bed bugs. To complete a block treatment the infested unit will be treated, as well as the units above, below, to either side and directly across the hall. Chemicals used by the pest control company should be rotated through the treatment process to assist with any resistance the bed bugs are building to the chemicals. There needs to be a minimum of two chemical treatments followed by a third dusting treatment. For more severely infested units more chemical treatments will be required.

## What are the benefits of Integrated Pest Management?

Although initially an IPM may appear to be more costly than not using an IPM, long-term money will be saved. Studies have shown that IPMs can drastically reduce bed bugs in multi-unit buildings. It has been shown that in a high-rise social housing building, infestations were eliminated in 50% of units and the overall number of infested units was reduced by 63%. It is important to note that in this study the pest control company did not follow all IPM guidelines. The pest control company did not take the count of bed bugs in units as tracked through detectors into consideration when planning treatment; as such even though some units had bed bug activity in the detectors those units did not receive a treatment. By implementing an IPM, bed bug activity will be reduced not only within infested units, but also within the whole building as common areas should also be built into the prevention and treatment plan of the IPM. An IPM will also help to decrease the spread of bed bugs from unit to unit. With a decrease in the number of infested units and preventive measures in place for early detection, the long-term cost of treating for bed bugs will decrease for the landlord.

## Tenant Information

### **What do I do if I discover I have bed bugs?**

If you find a bed bug in your unit, the first thing you need to do is tell your landlord or property manager. Do not panic. Do not throw out any items. Often, furniture can be treated and saved. Remember, every piece of furniture you throw out you will have to replace at your own expense. Once your unit has been inspected and bed bug activity has been confirmed, a prep sheet will be provided to you. Follow the instructions and complete the prep. If you are unable to complete any of the tasks, speak with your landlord for assistance. It is your responsibility to ensure that your unit is prepared properly for treatment to occur.

### **What do I need to do to prepare my unit for treatment?**

Below is a list of some of the things that will be required for you to complete the prep work.

- All laundry needs to go in the dryer on high heat for a minimum of 60 minutes. If laundry is dirty put it through the washer on hot water, then the dryer on high heat for a minimum of 90 minutes.
- Laundry includes clothe, blankets, towels, jackets, stuffed animals and pillows
- Vacuum and steam your unit. This needs to be done to all floors, baseboards, couches, chairs and mattresses. If you do not have a steamer then vacuum at minimum.
- **ALL** items need to be bagged or put in click-lid containers. There should only be furniture remaining in the home. The bags or containers should then be stored neatly either on the balcony or in the middle of the room.
- Outlet/electrical covers will need to be removed. Ask your landlord and/or property manager for assistance with this task.
- It is imperative to the success of the treatment that the home is prepared properly and that all items remain bagged between the treatments.
- If you are not able to complete the required prep work, contact your landlord and/or property manager to advise them. They have a duty to accommodate, which differs in every situation.

## **Landlord Information**

### **What do I do if a tenant reports bed bugs in their unit?**

The first thing that should happen is an inspection of the unit. This can occur either by you or your pest control company. Upon verification of bed bugs in the unit, treatment will need to be scheduled. A prep sheet will need to be provided to the tenant. Ensure the tenant is provided with a reasonable amount of time to prepare their unit. This amount of time may vary from tenant to tenant. As a landlord it is your responsibility to make sure that units are treated for bed bugs and any other pests.

### **Duty to Accommodate**

All landlords have a duty to accommodate. Duty to accommodate means that sometimes you will need to treat a tenant differently in order to prevent or reduce discrimination. Duty to accommodate could require that you assist with some of the prep work for the tenant, pay for laundry services, pay for all prep work to occur by a reputable company, and/or work with the tenant to create a plan to allow the tenant more time to complete the prep work on their own. This is a collaborative process between the landlord, tenant and pest control company. For a landlord to pursue eviction through the Landlord and Tenant Board, for a tenant not complying with the prep requirements, the landlord would have to prove they completed their duty to accommodate up to the point of undue hardship. Undue hardship is the point at which the landlord can show that continuing to accommodate the tenant will cause a financial burden on the landlord and/or is disrupting the pleasure of other tenants and the issues cannot be resolved as shown by previous efforts.

## Treatment and Preparation Companies

Below is a list of companies that provide both treatment and prep services for bed bugs. Please note that these companies are not recommended by the Housing Help Centre, they are simply provided as a resource for both landlords and tenants.

ResQ Canada	289-489-0678
Truly Nolen	1-888-832-4705
Petty Pest Control	289-439-4343
Thermall Pest Control	905-390-1809
Rat Lab	1-844-944-0844
Terminix Pest Control	416-889-5585
Embros Pest Control	905-578-9494

## **Community Resources**

Below is a list of different agencies that could be of potential assistance.

**Public Health Bed Bug Reporting**

905-546-3570

**Hamilton Community Legal Clinic**

905-527-4572

**Hamilton Housing Help Centre**

905-526-8100

**Landlord and Tenant Board**

1-888-332-3234

**HALO Home and Life Organizers**

519-465-6625

**YWCA Developmental Services**

905-522-9922

**Gatekeepers**

905-527-3823 Ext 279

**Niagara Local Health**

905-684-9441

**Helping Hands**

905-546-3057

**Victoria Order of Nurses**

905-529-0700