

MOST ELUSIVE HOUSEHOLD PEST: BEDBUG

Bedbugs are usually found in human habitation, hiding in cracks and crevices in beds and bedding in the daytime, emerging at night to feed on human blood. Their bites usually do not cause irritation, but sometimes can cause red itchy welts in allergic people. Bedbugs possess stink glands on their legs that cause a disgusting odour when disturbed. Bedbugs get their name because they like to live and feed in beds.

Do bedbugs transmit diseases?

Bed bugs do not transmit diseases, but their bites can cause itchy welts in allergic people. Although bed bugs can feed on any warm-blooded animal, they primarily feed on humans.

Has there really been resurgence in bedbugs around the world and how do you know?

There HAS been an increase in bedbug infestations. Various pest management associations across the world have reported a marked increase in calls for bedbugs. For example, I.P.C.A. (Indian Pest Control Association), India reports that their members who received 1 or 2 bedbug calls a year are now reporting several calls every week.

Where are bedbugs generally found?

Bed bugs like to travel and will hide in suitcases, boxes and shoes to be near a food supply. They are elusive, nocturnal creatures. They can hide behind baseboards, electrical switch plates, picture frames, even wall paper. They come out at night for a blood meal. These pests are not limited to any one specific type of dwelling. Pest management companies have been reporting infestations in multi-family housing, apartments, hotels, public transport vehicles and even hospitals.

Why do bedbugs require special treatment?

Bedbugs should NOT be equated with filth or sanitation problems -- in hotels or in homes, for that matter. Bedbugs are VERY elusive, transient and nocturnal pests. They are often found in other areas besides the bed. And they are hardy. They can live for a year or more without eating and can withstand a wide range of temperatures from nearly freezing to almost 113 degrees Fahrenheit. Bedbugs CAN be controlled with vigilance and constant inspection and treatment by professional pest management companies.

Are bedbugs hard to control?

No. They simply require the expertise and constant attention of pest management professionals such as I.P.C.A. members. City wise list of pest management professionals can be found in Yellow Pages or visit www.ipca.org.in

Are bedbugs just in beds?

Bedbugs are not just in beds. They can be in chair cushions, sofas, behind electrical outlets, cracks and crevices around baseboards, or even behind picture frames. In other words, they can live pretty much anywhere. When returning from a trip, check your luggage and clothing. Be especially vigilant when you have travelled in trains, buses and also inspect clothes that have come back from the 'dhobi' or washerman, carefully.

How does one control bedbugs?

Any effective bed bug control strategy should start with a careful, thorough inspection by a pest management professional of all known and suspected spots where the bugs may be harbouring. This is not a pest that can be controlled effectively with do-it-yourself measures. As they are discovered, the pest management professional from I.P.C.A. will develop a treatment and control strategy (in consultation with the customer) depending on the extent of the infestation.

Can you suggest any do-it-yourself measures for effective control of bedbugs?

Calling in an I.P.C.A. Professional Pest Management Company is the best measure to effectively control bedbug infestations.