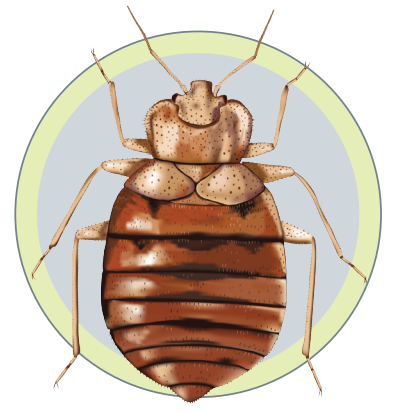


BED BUG MYTHS



It's easy to get incorrect information about bed bugs and their impact on our lives. Knowledge of bed bug facts will help you understand what you need to do to control them. Here are some common bed bug myths and the real facts.

1. YOU CAN'T SEE BED BUGS

Adult bed bugs are easily spotted. Adult bed bugs are 3mm - 5mm in size - about the size and shape of an apple seed - and a reddish brown colour.

2. THROW OUT YOUR BED AND YOU'LL BE RID OF BED BUGS

They may be called bed bugs but they don't just live in your bed. They can occupy almost any dark crack or crevice in a room. Almost everything including clothing, bedding, furniture and electronics can be treated to remove bed bugs. By disposing of infested furniture prior to it being inspected and treated, you can actually spread bed bugs. If you need to dispose of furniture or a mattress, make sure it is sealed with plastic and mark the item to indicate it has been infested by bed bugs. If possible, destroy items prior to disposal to make them unusable.

3. YOU ONLY GET BED BUGS IF YOU LIVE IN A LOW-INCOME NEIGHBOURHOOD

Bed bugs are an exposure pest and are not necessarily associated with living conditions. Bed bugs can happen to anyone, anywhere. You get bed bugs by coming into contact with them. Increasingly, people who frequently travel become exposed to bed bugs and bring them back home.

4. YOU NEED TO WASH ALL OF YOUR CLOTHES FOR A BED BUG TREATMENT TO BE EFFECTIVE

Yes as a general rule washing in hot water and drying on the hot setting can help destroy bed bugs in clothing. But you might not have to wash all your clothes. The first thing you need to do is have your home or apartment inspected by a professional pest control expert.

5. IT'S TOO COLD FOR BED BUGS IN CANADA

Even with our cold winters bed bugs continue to survive in all parts of Canada. Bed bugs can be found in almost every country and region. Bed bugs are a global pest.

6. YOU CAN'T GET BED BUGS FROM A NEIGHBOUR AS LONG AS HE DOESN'T VISIT YOU AND KEEPS HIS DOOR SHUT.

Migration of bed bugs from a neighbour is a lot more common than people believe. In apartments or condos the risk of migration is greater because bed bugs can travel through cracks, vents or spaces in a shared wall. If you think your neighbour has an issue with bed bugs, check your bed and living area on a weekly basis to make sure bed bugs are detected at the earliest stages. Speak to your landlord or condo association. A building-wide effort to control bed bugs is needed.

7. YOU CAN'T HAVE BED BUGS WHEN YOU HAVE NOT TRAVELLED ANYWHERE RECENTLY

Travel, whether overseas or in Canada, is not the only possible source of bed bugs. We find it hard to imagine where we might have picked up bed bugs. Yet situations such as a trip abroad, riding public transit, having a houseguest or purchasing a piece of second hand furniture can offer bed bugs a free ride into your home or apartment.

8. IT CAN'T BE BED BUGS BECAUSE YOU GET BITTEN BUT YOUR PARTNER DOES NOT

The simple fact is that two people sleeping in the same bed may both be bitten by bed bugs but respond in a different way. Some people immediately have a reaction to the bites while others show little or no sign.

9. BED BUGS ARE RESISTANT TO ALL PESTICIDES

Bed bugs are not resistant to all pesticides, but they are becoming increasingly resistant to over used pesticides. Home pesticide sprays or foggers do not work on bed bugs. Pest control companies continue to develop new ways to treat bed bugs. It is best to let a trained and licensed bed bug pest control expert select and apply the right pesticide.

10. THERE ARE OVER THE COUNTER BUG SPRAYS OR REMEDIES THAT WILL GET RID OF BED BUGS.

Over the counter bug spray, rubbing alcohol, and kerosene are some of the home remedies being used to try to eradicate bed bugs. However, such home remedies are considered to be ineffective and some are fire hazards. The best way to get rid of bed bugs is to hire a licensed pest control expert and follow their instructions.

11. IF YOU SLEEP IN A METAL BED YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT BED BUGS.

Although it is true that metal beds are less hospitable to bed bugs, simply replacing all beds with metal ones will not solve a bed bug problem. In some cases, metal beds may cause bed bugs to hide in less obvious areas of the bed, making the matter worse. And throwing out your metal bed will not simply solve the problem, but it could also expose others to an infestation.

12. YOU CAN GET SICK FROM BED BUG BITES

Bed bugs do not spread disease among humans. Bed bug bites can get infected if you scratch them excessively. Some people can develop allergic sensitivities to bed bug infestations. The most significant health effects appear to be the psychological, including stress, anxiety, depression, and fatigue that can be caused by the presence of bed bugs in the home.