

ACES Factsheet: **DIY BEDBUG TREATMENT**



Thought to be have been eradicated post World War 2, they have recently made a comeback.

While there is no specific reason why they are increasing, there are couple of factors that are helping their spread. Firstly many of the bedbugs today are resistant to the majority of the current insecticides. Secondly, while a pest control treatment may reduce the numbers down, it is thought often some bedbugs remain to continue their spread.

WHAT IS A BEDBUG?

A bedbug is a Hemipteran e.g. cicadas. Bedbugs are unique in that they have evolved to suck blood from their host.

They are a reddish brown colour, oval in shape, thin and the size of a water mellon seed. Juveniles are smaller but similar in shape. Newly hatched juveniles are the size of a pinhead, round and white/translucent. Their eggs are white.

SHOULD I BE CONCERNED?

While it is rare for Bed bugs to spread disease, their bites often result in swollen itchy welts. Further people with bed bug infestations report they are distressed by them and often have trouble sleeping. There have been reports overseas of people misusing pest control chemicals in desperate attempts to get rid of them.

HOW DO I KNOW I HAVE BEDBUGS?

Without seeing a bedbug here are some warning signs:

- Waking with bites. In particular around your neck, arms and face. These may appear in a line or cluster.
- Black marks on your mattress or bed base. These look like a fountain pen has been left to run and left a blotch of black ink. It is actually their waste products and black colour is the iron from your blood.
- Exoskeletons and eggs. The exoskeletons/cases are transparent/light brown. The eggs are white small cylinders.
- If you cannot locate a bedbug it doesn't mean you don't have them.

DIY BED BUG TREATMENT

As bed bugs are becoming resistant to many chemicals, there are other options that are effective.

1. Heat. All insects perish where exposed to temperatures above 62 degrees Celsius.

A safe way of exposing bed bugs to heat is using a steamer. High pressure steamers are invasive, meaning they get into crack and crevice where bed bugs hide.

2. Cold. All insects perish when they get too cold. Got an infested item? Why not bag it then put it in the freezer? Leave it there for 30 minutes.

3. Silicon dust. Fine silicon dust attaches to any insects exoskeleton and causes it to dry out. Silicon dust is organic and NON toxic (to humans). Make sure you apply this to areas with bed bugs e.g. under slats on wooden bed base, once a week for 2-3 weeks. Kills 100% of resistant bed bugs!

4. Traps. Source some bed bug traps. Traps are good for two reasons, first they alert you there is bed bugs there. Secondly they catch and detain bed bugs!

These factsheets are only provided as a guide only. ACES are not responsible for any actions taken as a result of reading this factsheet. If you are unsure - consult a professional.