



**You've got  
bedbugs.**



**DON'T  
PANIC!**

What you need to know to fight the battle.

Cowleys Termite & Pest Services  
[Cowleys.com](http://Cowleys.com)



Have bedbugs?  
Don't despair.

It's a resolvable  
problem.

Bed bugs are  
primitive,  
brainless  
parasites.

Against a  
knowledgeable  
pest control  
professional, they  
don't stand a  
chance.



You need a battle plan.

**Don't Panic!**

To win the war against bed bugs you need a battle plan with field-proven strategies. Address the problem immediately and coordinate your efforts with a licensed pest control professional experienced in bed bug eradication. In addition to the most effective and safest chemical applications, pest control professionals are also equipped with bed bug-killing equipment such as specialized room heaters and dry high-temperature steam cleaners. During the inspection, many bed bug pros, if it is needed for the particular job, team up with certified, trained bed bug scent detection dogs to quickly isolate the location of the insects. For infestations involving large square footage and buildings with extensive rooms, these dogs, with their pinpoint accuracy, are miracle workers.



**The homeowner must be part  
of the plan.**

The homeowner usually has plenty of preparatory and ongoing monitoring work to do even if hiring a pest control professional. The pest control professional should give the homeowner spe-



cific directions so nothing is left to chance. The successful removal of a bed bug infestation has to be a coordinated effort with the pest control professional and the homeowner.

“ There is only one way to attack the bed bug problem: killing them.”

## Contain and kill.

If you have an infestation, time is your enemy. You don't have the luxury of experimenting with different treatments to see what works. Anyone experienced in bed bug removal has developed specific field-tested protocols that need to be followed to resolve the infestation in a timely manner. As the bed bug population grows, you lose the advantage of localized containment. The objective with bed bug removal is to keep the bed bugs contained and then kill them. To do that, you need to understand bed bug biology and the available treatment options. You need the experience and know-how to devise the most effective plan for each particular situation.

## Use insecticides wisely.

The proper application of insecticides is critical when used inside a residence to ensure the health and safety of its occupants. Pest control professionals are concerned about insecticide optimization. The objective is to use the least amount of insecticide to achieve the desired result - a complete elimination of the infestation. To do that, you need to know what to apply, in the right formulation, and where. For example, many products are not labeled for mattresses.



*Bed bug infested couch.*

Never make the tradeoff of killing bed bugs by overloading your home with chemicals.

## Plan an attack that is deadly for the bed bugs but safe for you.

Licensed pest control professionals affiliated with a state or national association stay up-to-date on current practices and use only legal insecticides that are safe for your family. This holds especially true for sensitive situations such as household residents who are ill with compromised immune systems, children, elderly, pregnant women, and pets who live their lives on treated areas. Also, if the insecticides are not properly applied, you can do more harm than good by driving the bed bugs into new areas making removal an even longer and more costly process.

## Keep a clear head.

The usual reaction to the discovery of a bed bug infestation is sheer panic. And panic often leads to rash decision-making and outcomes that make matters worse or waste money. At the top of the list is the natural reaction to fight bed bugs via the dumpster, by throwing away “contaminated” mattresses, furniture, and other personal belongings. Stop! Wait for the advice of a pest control professional after inspection of your premises. You’ll save yourself money. Most, if not all of your belongings, are salvageable. Despite all the media hype, bed bugs are just another insect. Admittedly, they are more challenging to eradicate than most



other insects because of their stealth and their resiliency to chemical treatments. And it doesn’t help that they are parasites that feed off human hosts. But at the end of the day, they are just nasty little insects. They have not turned your personal possessions into radioactive isotopes.

“Fear of bedbugs has driven people to overuse common pesticides resulting in serious health problems.”

## Wisely choose the General who will Lead the charge in the Bed Bug Battle.

If there was ever the time to bring in the “big guns” of a pest control professional, it is with a bed bug infestation. They have the knowledge and they have the weapons of bug destruction. Bed bugs are hardy creatures, but they are far from indestructible. As any living organism, they are easily capable of being eradicated.



*Searching for bedbugs.*

## The DO's of fighting bed bugs.

There are many tasks for a homeowner to help fight bed bugs. They all relate Integrated Pest Management (IPM). The term "IPM" sounds fancy, but the more you learn about it, it really is just common sense approach to pest control.

### Why IPM?

IPM is the EPA-recommended way to go for pest control including bed bugs. It is today's gold standard for pest control professionals. Study after study has shown that IPM is cost-effective, it works, and it lessens reliance on insecticides. A pest control professional dedicated to IPM procedures and practices can explain this in more detail. It is an approach that recognizes every job has its unique considerations and constraints and that solutions are multi-tactic including cultural controls, biological controls, mechanical and physical controls, and



*Bed bugs on sheets.*



*Bed bugs on blankets.*

chemical controls. The notion behind IPM is that one must address the underlying cause to have a long-term solution. It is analogous to merely alleviating symptoms rather than diagnosing and treating the underlying cause of a disease for permanent resolution.

The objective in treating bed bugs is complete elimination of ALL of the bed bugs, nymphs, and eggs -- not just a decent percentage of them. The IPM pest control professional seeks a permanent resolution of the infestation not merely a short-term fix.

## Homeowner participation is critical.

The pest control professional cannot do his job without it. Homeowners often have a lot of preparatory work to do. The pest control professional will provide specific instructions based on your particular circumstances. It can be a hassle. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise. If the preparatory work isn't done properly, it is likely the infestation won't be completely eliminated. And, while things may seem better for a while, it is only a matter of time until the bed bug population increases and you are back to square one.

“By contacting a pest control professional immediately, you can stop a small problem from turning into a major one.”

## IPM and Insecticides

There is a common misconception that IPM means no insecticides. That is not the case. Rather, IPM calls for minimizing the use of insecticides by applying only what is necessary to get the job done. IPM is all about being smart about the use of insecticides in conjunction with other strategies. When implementing an IPM strategy, insecticides are one component, albeit an important one, of the overall pest removal strategy. Above all else, the goal of the IPM professional is to leave your home safe for your family.



*Bed bug bites.*

## Do I have bed bugs?

If there are strong indications of a bed bug infestation such as unexplained bites and dark spotting on your sheets, especially after you have come back from a trip or you have visitors, you may have bed bugs. If not, the pest control professional can rule it out.

## “Help, I’m getting bitten in my bed!”

Often, we get calls when people start waking up with unexplained bites. Bed bugs feed while people sleep, usually about an hour before dawn, but if hungry and given the opportunity, they have no fixed feeding schedule. Although bites sometimes occur in threes, it's not always the case. Bites have no pattern. They can occur in a line, in clumps, or individually. Bites can show up in two hours later or two weeks later depending on the individual's reaction to the bite. The bed bug draws only a drop or two of blood before returning to its hiding place. Initially, if there are only a few bugs, it is difficult to tell whether there are bed bugs because each bug only feeds every five to ten days.



On the other hand, if you are waking up daily with multiple bites, there is a fairly significant infestation of some sort of biting bug. Some people get an itchy rash as a reaction to the bug's saliva; others have no reaction at all. You cannot definitively confirm an infestation based on evidence of bites alone. For direct, proof-positive evidence, you need to see, and hopefully capture, a bed bug and have it identified. If you try and can't do it, an experienced bed bug professional can readily determine whether there is an infestation. But don't wait until you actually see a bug, signs alone are enough to contact a pest control professional. Nocturnal bed bugs are tricky devils when it comes to finding hiding places during the day.

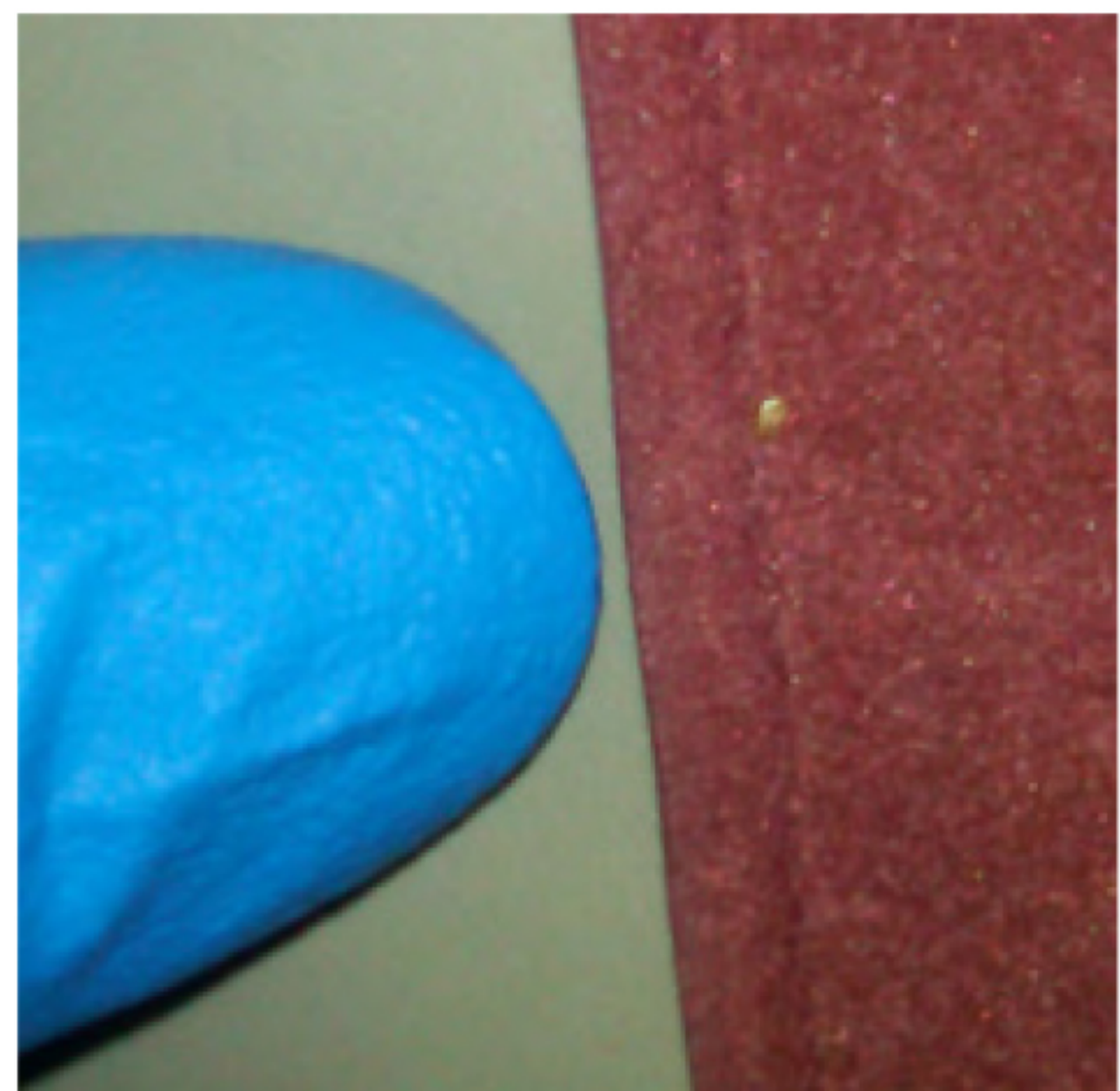
“To be a bed bug hunter, you need to know what you are looking for.”

Bed bugs have a distinguishable appearance. They are inherently ugly make-your-skin-crawl bugs. The typical adult bed bug is oval, flat, about 1" long, and has 6 legs. A recently fed bed bug is red, plump and oval. After it digests, its meal, it returns to its mahogany-colored, round and flat shape, resembling a lentil. In fact, bed bugs are often called mahogany flats, red coats, and lentils on legs in reference to their shape and color. Adult bed bugs can be seen without any magnification; tiny nymphs are a different story.

“Bed bugs can't fly and have no wings.”



*Bed bug.*



*Newly hatched bed bug.*



*Bed Bugs, eggs and cast skins.*

With bed bugs you will often find evidence of bed bugs first. Most commonly, there will be dark spots on your sheets from blood or fecal material. These spots look like dots made by a felt-tipped marker. Newly hatched nymphs are tan and about 1/16 of an inch (1 mm). Bed Bugs eggs are oval, white, and stick to whatever they are laid on.

Bed bugs have three life stages: eggs, nymphs, and adults. Signs of bed bugs include blood/fecal spots, hatched eggs, and cast skins. It helps the pest control professional to write what you have done and what you have seen. Your observations give focus and guidance to the efforts of the pest control professional in their own inspection.

“The first step in eradicating bed bugs is locating them. Those areas of active infestation in your home will be the battlefields.”

## Knowing the Probable Source of the Infestation Can Help Locate the Bugs

Bed bugs come into a home or building as stowaways hidden away in luggage, furniture, clothing, pillows, boxes, and more when these are moved between dwellings. They can also be carried on someone's person or their immediate belongings like handbags and backpacks.

Bed bugs are found in any place that has a high turnover of people, especially in locations where there are clusters of people sleeping there since sleeping humans are such easy prey. That is why structures such as hotels, motels, apartment complexes, university dormitories,

nursing homes, and hospitals rank at the top of the list of bed bug transfer locations. But don't let your guard down. Bed bugs can be found anyplace where large numbers of people congregate.

The locations of bed bug activity are virtually unlimited but include subways, trains and theaters. Bed bugs may also be found at used furniture outlets, at businesses that sell second-hand clothing, and at laundromats. Laundromats are a common location of bed bugs because people don't want to wash their contaminated clothing at home so they do the



neighborly thing and bring their potentially infested clothes to a facility open to the public. Because bed bugs can survive for many months without food, bed bugs can already be present in a clean, vacant apartment.

Bed bugs infestations have absolutely nothing to do with poor sanitation and hygiene, and everything to do with easy access to human blood. Bed bugs can be found in the cleanest of homes and facilities, even hospitals. Clutter makes bed bugs harder to find and treat but it is not a cause of bed bugs. Bed bugs have one and only one interest: human blood. And they want their hosts to be inactive easy prey. So they prefer people to be fast asleep in bed when its feeding time.



Knowing the source of the infestation helps determine where the inspection should start.

## We suggest the following order:

1. Inspect the bedrooms first, specifically the bed within the bedroom, before moving to the shades and other areas of the room.
2. Check the couch where people may nap or watch TV.
3. If you still haven't located any bed bugs, consider the possible source of entry into your home.
4. If you or a family member returned home from a vacation, begin where the luggage was placed.
5. If you have a child with a backpack coming to and from school, it may well be infested with bed bugs. Inspect the backpack as well as the bed or couch nearest to where the backpacks are kept.
6. If the problem began after a visitor stayed overnight, that could be the source of your problem. Your welcomed guest may have unknowingly brought in some unwelcomed guests. Inspect the bed he or she slept in and where their luggage was placed.

### ***Save any bugs you find.***

For those who attempt to do a preliminary inspection on their own, if you find a bug, freeze it for identification in a zip-lock or put it in a sealed jar with a tablespoon of rubbing alcohol. Then stop looking! You don't want to disrupt the bugs and have them disperse.



*Bed bugs can be brought home in backpacks.*

## So you have bed bugs. Now what?

### These are the DO's of bed bug control .

1. Choose light-colored bedding. It is easier to see insects and spot blood.
2. Don't store things under beds.
3. Get rid of clutter anywhere near the bed.
4. Use tight fitting, zippered, bed bug proof mattress, box spring, and pillow encasements. Putting them on during an infestation means no need to throw them away. Check them periodically to make sure they haven't torn. Bed bugs trapped inside encasements cannot get out and will die of starvation since they lose access to their food source, human blood. It will keep others out and force them into areas that will be treated and are more observable. .
5. Wash and dry your sheets daily. It would be the rare bed bug that can survive being washed on hot and then dried at temperatures of 130 degrees or more for at least a half hour. This one-two punch will kill any bed bug caught up in your sheets.
6. Put any clothes, linen, extra bedding, drapes, curtains, anything that can handle the dryer, including your belongings that are dry-cleanable, in the dryer for at least a half-hour. Then immediately put the clothes in clean plastic bags and seal them. This removes more harborages for the bed bugs. When transporting clothing from one room to another put them in a bag so no bed bugs fall off in transit.
7. Seal cracks in wooden floors.
8. Repair peeling wallpaper. Bed bugs find loose wallpaper to be an attractive hiding place.
9. Keep bedding and dust ruffles from touching the floor and consider removing the ruffles entirely. They are prime hiding spots for bed bugs.



*Wash and dry sheets daily if you have bed bugs.*



**TERMITE & PEST SERVICES**

## The Most Important Bed Bug Tip: Contact a Pest Control Professional

A bed bug infestation cannot be resolved until an action plan is implemented that includes field-tested, clinically proven, effective strategies and products. Only a licensed pest control professional has the resources to successfully remove these infestations. Applying ineffective products or home remedies only gives the bed bugs more time to gain a

foothold in your home. And two weeks later, you are dealing with a larger, more costly infestation. The sooner a pest control professional who is experienced in bed bug infestations is contacted, the faster the bugs will be out of your home and out of your life.

