

BELOW ARE SOME FACTS AND ADVICE ON BED BUG AND BED BUG INFESTATION

Q: Are bed bugs large enough for me to see?

A: **YES.** Although they may be difficult to find because they hide well, bed bugs are big enough to see with the naked eye. Bed bugs look similar to an apple seed in size and appearance.

Q: My home is clean, aren't bed bugs are only found in homeless shelters or where it is dirty?

A: **NO.** Bed bugs can be found in hotels, motels, dormitories, apartments, condos, private homes and even in some public places, such as businesses and offices. Anyplace, clean or not, can get bed bugs.

Q: If I walk into a room that has bed bugs will I get bed bugs?

A: **NO.** Bed bugs do not jump. They spend 90 per cent of their time hiding and are usually only active at night. Bed bugs avoid light and do not like to be disturbed.

Q: My husband travels a lot, are you more likely to get bed bugs in hotels?

A: **YES.** Although most hotels have actual bed bug strategies and do a very good job at keeping their rooms bed bug-free, by traveling you are increasing the risk of bringing unwanted hitchhikers home. If you feel that you have come into contact with bed bugs, don't bring your suitcase into the home. Simply place it in a garbage bag, tie it securely and bring it to Browns.

Q: Can bed bugs cause disease?

A: **NO.** Bed bugs are not considered a health hazard and do not transmit disease. Bed bug bites, however, can cause an allergic reaction similar to a mosquito bite in some people. Frequent scratching of the bite marks or picking the scabs can cause infections. People who experience severe and/or repeated infestations can feel

anxious, worried or ashamed.

Q: Will chemicals or pesticides kill bed bugs?

A: **Pesticide application alone will not kill bed bugs at all stages of their lifecycle. Successful treatment depends on an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to bed bug control. IPM involves vacuuming, steaming and laundering belongings, sealing cracks and gaps where bed bugs can hide, as well as the use of chemicals. Do not use over-the-counter pest control products or home remedies such as kerosene.**

Q: Do I run the risk of getting bed bugs if I take my garments into a Browns location that is treating bed bug infested garments?

A: **NO.** Our cleaning and delivery processes ensure that you always receive clean, and bug-free, items.

TREATMENT

The Toronto Bed Bug Project in conjunction with the Structural Pest Management Association of Ontario and its members has developed a set of guidelines for the treatment of bed bugs in multi-unit dwellings for Pest Management Professionals (PMP).

Before the treatment begins, all occupants, including pets, must leave the unit and not enter for a minimum of three to four hours after the technician arrives. Aquariums may remain in place as long as the filtration and aeration systems are turned off and the tank is adequately covered. Filtration and aeration equipment should be turned back on six hours after treatment. Anyone who is pregnant or has allergies or asthma should consult their doctor.

Before treatment:

- all clutter should be removed from the unit
- if possible, steam clean, wet vacuum or shampoo any carpeting and furnishings
- vacuum the mattress thoroughly including the crevices, handles and buttons
- vacuum the bed frame, baseboards and objects or flooring close to bed
- discard the vacuum bag in a tightly sealed garbage bag
- remove all clothing from dressers and place in clean plastic bags or plastic totes
- bookshelves, nightstands or other furniture in the immediate area must be emptied so the technician can spray the underside of furniture
- place all items in tightly sealed garbage bags and leave them in the room to be treated

LAUNDERING

All clothing items should be placed in garbage bags, sealed and emptied directly into the washing machine. It is important to launder items using hot water, as cold water will not kill bed bugs or their eggs. When the laundering cycle is complete, the clean laundry should be placed in new clear garbage bags and sealed during the treatment process. The garbage bags used for transporting clothing to the laundry room should be discarded outside of the premise, as they may contain bed bugs. If possible, for severe infestations, water-

soluble bags should be used to collect sheets and clothing and put directly into the wash. All clean clothes should be put in the dryer on high for a minimum of 20 minutes. Some clothing may require dry cleaning. Most washers and dryers are not properly equipped with the appropriate capabilities to kill the bed bugs we recommend that you place the items in a garbage bag and tightly secure and bring the items to Browns.

BEDS

All bedding must be removed before the technician arrives. Soiled bedding should be washed in hot water, separate from other laundry, or dry-cleaned before or soon after the treatment to avoid a resurgence of bed bugs. Pillows should also be placed in the dryer on high heat for a minimum of 20 minutes. After treatment, bedding should be tucked in tightly, and the bed kept a few inches away from the wall. Bed skirts should not be used. Browns large steam tunnel can accommodate bulkier items such as comforters, duvets, etc. Since most washers and dryers are not properly equipped with the appropriate capabilities to kill the bed bugs we recommend that you place the items in a garbage bag and tightly secure and bring the items to Browns.

BABY CRIBS

All linen should be laundered. All toys should be washed in soapy, hot water and stuffed toys should be placed in the dryer on high heat for 20 minutes. Most washers and dryers are not properly equipped with the appropriate capabilities to kill the bed bugs. To ensure future infestation, place the items in a garbage bag and tightly secure. Browns treatment can ensure the bugs are killed and the bedding and toys are fully sanitized.

DRESSERS AND NIGHT TABLES

All contents of dressers are to be placed in garbage bags and placed in the dryer cycle on hot for a minimum of 20 minutes. All articles on top of the dresser are to be removed and placed in plastic bags or plastic totes. Bookshelves, nightstands or other furniture in the immediate area must be emptied so that the technician can spray the undersides of the furniture. Furniture and items should be moved at least 30 cm (12 inches) away from the walls to facilitate spraying the base-

boards. Shelving and drawers should be clean. Browns can accommodate more cumbersome and delicate objects such as lampshades, stuff toys, etc.

CLOSETS

All closets including linen closets are to be emptied. Clean articles should be placed in the dryer on high heat for a minimum of 20 minutes. All soiled articles need to be washed in hot water and then dried at high heat. Laundromat dryers may have lower heat settings and may not heat up to 60 C, so a full cycle should be used. To avoid taking a chance with your washer and dryer capabilities, place the items in a garbage bag and tightly secure. Browns treatment can ensure the bugs are killed and your clothes are fully sanitized.

SOFAS AND CHAIRS

All chair covers, throws and pillows must be laundered prior to treatment.

DISPOSAL OF FURNITURE

Discarding beds, bedding and furniture is NOT a sound approach to bed bug control as new items can easily be re-infested. Furniture infested with bed bugs that cannot be salvaged needs to be disposed of in a manner that will prevent the further spread of the bugs. In the process of removing a piece of furniture, bed bugs can escape into hallways and make their way into new apartments, spreading the problem to new areas.

If you decide to throw out bed bug infested furniture:

- take apart or damage the piece of furniture to ensure it cannot be reused, then wrap the furniture in plastic so bed bugs cannot escape — this should be done in the unit before it is removed
- a mattress should be slashed or otherwise damaged to make it unusable, then wrapped in plastic so bed bugs cannot escape — this should be done in the unit before it is removed put items in the trash shortly before pickup, so they do not sit at the curb for a long time

ADDITIONAL INFO

The City of Ottawa has an informative webpage: http://www.ottawa.ca/residents/health/environments/bed_bug/index_en.html where users have access to city resources and help.



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