



PEST CONTROL FACTS - BED BUGS

Bedbugs belong to the family Cimicidae. There are two species that feed on humans, namely *Cimex lectularius* and *Cimex hemipterus*, the former being the cause of most domestic complaints and is known as the common bedbug.

Adult bedbugs are oval, wingless insects, which are around 5-7 mm long. When unfed, they are pale yellow or brownish in colour, but after a full blood meal, they take a darker uniform 'mahogany' brown colour.

They normally prefer human hosts to fulfil their blood requirements, but in the absence of people, bedbugs will also feed on a variety of other hosts, such as rabbits, rats, mice, bats, poultry and other birds. At night, adults and nymphs crawl from resting places to feed on sleeping people, after which they return to their resting sites to digest the blood meal.

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PEST CONTROL BED BUGS

LIFECYCLE

Eggs hatch after around 12-14 days at 23 °C and give rise to nymphs. These newly hatched bedbugs also feed on blood. Unhatched eggs can remain viable for 3 months. The life cycle from egg to adult can be as short as 3 weeks. Adults can survive more than a year without blood feeding.

NUISANCE PEST

Because of their preference for human hosts, bedbugs live in close association with human beings and consequently cause substantial nuisance. The bites cause itching and redness for most people. There is no evidence of bedbugs being involved in the transmission of infections or diseases to people. Bedbug activity can however cause considerable distress. Reaction to their bites is variable, some people show little or no reaction whereas others may suffer severe reactions and have sleepless nights.

INSPECTION

Areas that need to be covered include mattresses, bed frame, bedside furniture, electrical fittings and appliances, underneath carpet edges and skirting, wallpaper and paint if loose, curtains and any wall hangings.

Signs of bedbug activity include the presence of live bedbugs, hatched or unhatched eggs. Bedbug activity could also be detected by small dark brown or black marks on the bed sheets, caused by the bedbugs excreta. It has been noted that bedbugs are commonly introduced in second-hand furniture and bedding, where the bugs often remain undetected for considerable periods until a suitable host appears.

TREATMENT

Upon identification of bedbug activity, a residual spray application could be carried out on the floors, walls and furniture. Additionally, it is recommended to conduct targeted treatment of cracks and crevices, which are the main harbourage areas, with either a residual spray or dust application.

The suggested treatment regime, below, utilises a mixture of insecticide groups and formulations, ensuring an integrated approach to control and management.

Treatment 1 - (initial treatment)

Microencapsulated Synthetic Pyrethroid + IGR + Dust

Treatment 2 - (after 2 weeks, or depending on temperature & egg hatch)

Residual Synthetic Pyrethroid + IGR + Dust

Treatment 3 - (after 4 weeks, dependant on temperature & egg hatch)

Residual carbamate + IGR + Dust