

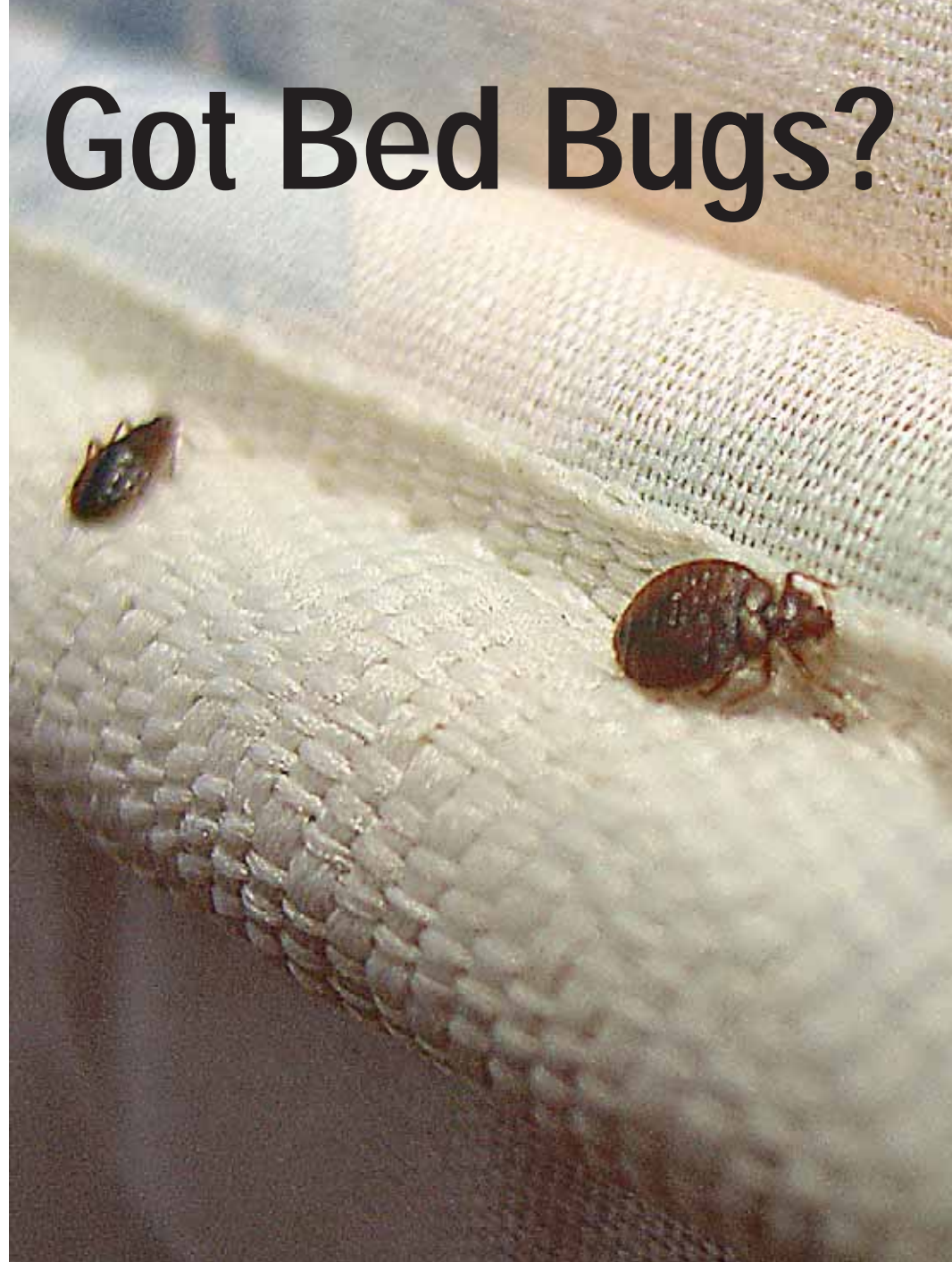
Unfed

After a blood meal



Various life stages shown on a human hand

Got Bed Bugs?



When choosing a pest control company, make sure the company meets all the legal requirements that qualifies them to service your home, including a Pennsylvania Pesticide Applicator Certification or Registered Technician card, a business license and general liability insurance coverage. Also ask for a list of local references so you can learn about their past performance in treating bed bugs.

For more information, go to our bed bug resources link
<http://extension.psu.edu/bedbug>
or please contact us at either location listed below.

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University Park, PA 16802

Phone: 814-865-2839 • Email: paipm@psu.edu

<http://www.paipm.org>

Pennsylvania IPM Program in Philadelphia
Philadelphia School and Community IPM Partnership

Penn State Philadelphia Outreach Center

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The PA IPM Program:

Empowering individuals and communities to safely manage pests through education and training.

*Providing education and training for: Healthy Homes, Healthy Schools, Healthy Communities,
and Healthy People.*

The Pennsylvania Integrated Pest Management Program
Philadelphia School & Community IPM Partnership



Bed bugs are making a comeback in apartment buildings, dorm rooms, hotels, hospitals and homes. Why now? Both people, and the things they buy, are traveling greater distances and more frequently, causing hitchhiking bed bugs to spread more rapidly. Follow the steps below to learn how to identify, prevent, and control them safely and effectively.

Step 1 - Pest Identification



Adult bed bugs compared to a dime

What exactly are bed bugs? Bed bugs are blood-feeding parasites that bite people at night and hide during the day. They are tiny, less than 1/8 inch, wingless, chestnut brown in color, with flattened, generally oval-shaped bodies. They become swollen, elongated, and dark red after a blood meal. Bed bug bites may cause itchy welts on their victims. They often leave small dark spots on sheets and other surfaces. Bed bugs do not cause or spread any diseases but **do** cause mental anguish – no one wants to “let the bed bugs bite”!

They are difficult to control because their small size enables them to hide almost anywhere in and around their feeding sites on mattresses and bed frames, cracks and crevices in walls, under peeling paint or behind wall sockets. Unlike head lice that remain on human heads, bed bugs only stay long enough to feed before moving away to hide.

Step 2 - Prevention

Bed bugs cannot fly so they infest homes by being transported in clothing, backpacks, suitcases, mattresses or other furniture. They can also walk in from adjacent apartments or rooms through cracks or conduits for electrical wiring or plumbing. They search for a sleeping human by moving up walls, bed linens, bed legs or anything touching the bed.

Prevent bed bugs from gaining a foothold in your home!



- Carefully inspect clothing and baggage after you have travelled. Place clothes in sealed plastic bags until they can be laundered.
- Avoid acquiring used furniture and mattresses – these may be infested.
- Remove clutter from the home, especially the bedrooms where bed bugs can find added places to hide.

- Seal cracks and crevices, especially those that lead to other rooms/floors.
- Keep beds clear above and below. Do not pile coats or “foreign” clothing on beds.
- Use solid, light-colored sheets – these make early detection of bed bugs easier.
- If you live in an apartment building and are concerned about bed bugs, keep them from climbing up the bed by pulling the bed away from the walls, making sure no

bedding touches the floor. Around each bed leg, spread a thick layer of petroleum jelly (e.g. Vaseline®) in a band at least 2 inches wide and about 6 inches off the floor. Bed bugs cannot crawl through this barrier. You can also use small, nested dishes of soapy water (in the outer dish) under each leg, or commercial devices such as the CLIMBUP® Insect Interceptor.



Step 3 - Controlling Bed Bugs Safely

To control bed bugs effectively a **combination of actions** will be needed. Control is difficult and because of this, it is best to consult a licensed and experienced pest management professional (PMP) to help rid your home of these pests.

For safe and effective control:

- An initial assessment of the severity of infestation is key. The PMP must conduct a thorough inspection of the home to look for bed bugs and their harborage sites for targeted cleaning and treatments.
- Inspect and vacuum mattresses, box springs, and bed frames, as well as carpets, and crack and crevices that bed bugs may hide in during the day.
- After vacuuming, enclose the mattress and the box springs in zippered encasements that are rated to prevent piercing by bed bug bites or their escape through zippers (e.g. Protect-A-Bed®). Any bed bugs remaining on the mattress and box spring will be trapped inside the cover. Leave the covers in place for a year or more because bed bugs can live that long without a blood meal.
- Wash bedding, pillows and clothing in hot water (140°F), or dry in the dryer on the hottest setting for at least 20 minutes.



Using Pesticides on Bed Bugs

If bed bugs have been found in your home, resist the urge to use household bug sprays! Bed bugs are resistant to most commonly-used pesticides. Using bug bombs and sprays on mattresses and in bedrooms will only increase YOUR exposures to more toxins, and will NOT control bed bugs. Since pesticides are poisons, they should be used sparingly and carefully. If chemicals are to be used, you should seek assistance from a **licensed** and professional pest control company, trained to deal with bed bugs.

Why you need help!

- Common household products generally will not kill bed bugs and can cause them to spread and infest other parts of the home.
- “Bug bombs” do not reach into the tiny cracks and crevasses, or into clutter where bed bugs can hide.
- Insect repellents such as OFF® sprayed on persons or mattresses will not stop bed bugs from biting, or kill the bed bugs. Repeated use of these products in this way can pose health threats to you and your family.
- The insecticides that are most effective, are those used by trained and licensed professionals and may require specialized equipment to apply. These are not readily available as household products and require state certification to purchase and use safely.
- Experienced companies know where to look for bed bugs, are schooled in proper techniques, and have an assortment of management tools at their disposal.