



Our Insect Enemies



Don't Let Bedbugs Drive You Crazy

(NAPSA)—They may be trying to put the bite on you, but you can fight back. “They” are bedbugs and they may be living in your sheets, mattress, floor boards, carpets, wallpaper, light fixtures, picture frames or just about any crack or crevice in your house. These tiny bloodsucking pests are quietly creeping into American homes.

Renowned hitchhikers, the pests catch rides in luggage, shoes, pant hems and any other mobile material. Experts attribute their increase to several things, including global travel and the mobility of the pest.

Adult bedbugs are about the size and shape of a lentil. Their color ranges from red to brownish. Bedbugs are very elusive, transient and nocturnal pests. They are often found in other areas besides the bed. They're also hardy—they can live for a year or more without eating and can withstand a wide range of temperatures from nearly freezing to almost 113° Fahrenheit—and prolific—a single bedbug can lay up to 500 eggs in her lifetime.

According to National Pest Management Association public affairs director, Cindy Mannes, bedbug infestations are not a sign of unsanitary or unclean living areas. Infestations can be difficult to detect due to the elusive, nocturnal and transient nature of the pest.

The first sign of a bedbug infestation, other than itchy welts, is usually small drops of blood on your sheets from the bedbug bites.



Bedbugs are a growing problem these days and can lurk in even the cleanest homes. Fortunately, professionals can get rid of them.

“The good news about bedbugs, if there is any,” says Mannes, “is that they are not disease-carrying.”

Her association suggests you consider the following while traveling:

- At hotels, pull down the bed covers at night. If you see something moving, or if you see spots on the sheets, move to another room.

- After traveling, vacuum your suitcases before bringing them into the house.

“Bedbug infestations should only be treated by trained, licensed professional pest management companies,” adds Mannes. “This is not an infestation that can be treated by do-it-yourself measures. Professionals know where to look and can offer the most up-to-date methods of bedbug control.”

For more information, visit www.pestworld.com or contact a pest control professional.