

Fact Sheet

October 2008

Myths and Facts about Bed Bugs



Myth: Bed bugs are too small to see.

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

Myth: Bed bugs are only found in shelters; only poor people or dirty people get them.

Fact: Bed bugs can be found in hotels, motels, dormitories, apartments, condos, private homes, and even in some public places, such as businesses and offices. Anyone can get bed bugs.

Myth: Walking into a room that has bed bugs means you will get bed bugs.

Fact: Bed bugs do not jump. They spend 90% of their time hiding and are usually active at night. Bed bugs avoid light and do not like to be disturbed.

Myth: Bed bugs cause disease.

Fact: There is no evidence that shows bed bugs transmit disease. Bed bug bites, however, can cause allergic reaction in some people similar to a mosquito bite. Frequent scratching of the bite marks or picking the scabs can cause infections. And people with severe and/or repeated infestations can feel anxious, worried or ashamed.

Myth: Chemicals/pesticides will kill bed bugs.

Fact: Pesticide application alone will not kill bed bugs at all stages. Successful treatment depends on an Integrated Pest Management approach to bed bug control which involves, vacuuming, and steaming, laundering belongings, sealing areas and gaps where bed bugs can hide. Do not use over the counter pest control products or home remedies such as kerosene.