



## **DON'T LET THE BED BUGS BITE !!!** (actual size)

Once you've got a bed bug problem, you must use persistence to eradicate them. Bed bugs are capable of surviving up to a year without feeding, live in small cracks and crevices in furniture, walls and floors and can thrive in a wide range of temperatures. Frequently vacuuming carpets, washing bedding and clothing in hot water and drying soft items that can't be washed on a high setting can help reduce an infestation.

To fully eradicate bed bugs, pesticides are sometimes needed, but there is no easy or certain spray or fumigation solution. Careful research should be done on the selection of pesticides and the label should be read thoroughly. It is best to discuss strategies and precautions with a licensed Pest Control company and get expert help with the treatment process. Sometimes disassembly of furnishings, laundering, janitorial, and pesticides are needed in combination with heat or steam treatments to achieve full eradication.

However, the best prevention strategies are to both bed bug-proof your home and avoid bringing them home from your travels. Here are a few tips:

- Keep your bedrooms free of clutter where they can hide and seal wall cracks and crevices. You can also use pesticide dusts or non-pesticide desiccant dusts like diatomaceous earth or silica gel in cracks and crevices.
- Inspect your mattresses, especially the seams, for bed bugs, molted shells and reddish-brown fecal spots. Vacuum every crevice thoroughly and do the same to everything near it: rugs, pictures, furniture, wallpaper, headboards, etc.
- Encase your mattress and box springs in mattress protectors.
- When traveling, never put your luggage on the bed. Instead, use the luggage rack and pull it away from the wall. Pull back all bedding and use a flashlight to check the seams of the mattress and the box springs where it meets the frame and headboard.
- Live out of your suitcase rather than unpacking your clothes in the hotel dresser drawers. If you use the closet, inspect it first. Also check the night stand and clock.
- Ask for a new room if you see any signs of bed bugs, preferably not next door.
- When you return home, immediately wash and/or dry your clothes and thoroughly vacuum your suitcase, inside and out. Daypacks and duffle bags can usually be put in the dryer inside a pillow case.
- Thrift store purchases should always be treated. Launder all washables in hot water and use a hot dryer so that they reach 120 degrees for several minutes. Place other articles including books, electronic items, shoes, toys, art work, lamps, etc. immediately into sealed containers and use fumigant strips for a length of time indicated by the label. Read the label carefully. Do not use bug bombs.

For More information go to the California Department of Public Health website:

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/healthinfo/discond/pages/bedbugs.aspx>