



Good Night, Sleep Tight, Don't Let the Bedbugs Bite

The lighthearted bedtime rhyme we learned as children – but did you ever really think about it? A bedbug bite? Could it really happen, or are bedbugs an old wives' tale? For the past 50 years, bedbugs were practically eradicated in the United States. Bedbug infestations are presently on the rise in America; many experts declare that bedbug infestations are at epidemic proportions. There are various theories that support the recent increase in bedbug infestations, mostly relating to more frequent worldwide travel. Lately, a resurgence of these irritating night-time critters has gained notoriety, particularly in the New York metropolitan area. When most people think of bedbugs, they tend to think of a grubby unkempt home. Although excessive clutter and poor sanitation habits provide more harboring sites for bedbugs, even pristine and lavish residences frequently become infested. Bedbugs can find their way into your living space through the walls from an adjacent infested unit in condominiums, townhouses, and apartments. They can attach themselves to your luggage in hotels and hostels as you carry them right into your home. Used clothing, furniture, mattresses, or linens may fetch you more than a bargain.

Bedbugs are small, reddish-brown, wingless, nocturnal insects, about 1/8" to 1/4" long. They feed solely on the blood from warm-blooded animals, including humans and household pets. Although bedbugs prefer to feed off people, Fido is no exception to a ravenous bedbug. They are highly resilient insects and can survive for months without a blood meal. Bedbugs crawl, and do not hop, fly, or jump. They are equipped with stink glands and emit a distinctive sweet-smelling odor which is observable in severely infested homes. One female bedbug can lay up to 500 eggs in her lifetime. Bedbug eggs hatch within 5 to 10 days. Due their vigorous life cycle, an infestation can seem to come out of nowhere practically overnight.

One common sign of a bedbug infestation is the emergence of itchy red welts on the skin. Some individuals do not react to a bedbug bite while others suffer from great discomfort. In extremely rare cases, anaphylactic shock may occur. Reactions to a bedbug bite may take up to 9 days to appear. Flea bites and mosquito bites are commonly mistaken for bedbug bites; a trained professional can help you determine the difference. Another indication of a bedbug infestation is the discovery of blood stains on bed linens or mattresses. If you suspect that you have a bedbug infestation, use a high-powered flashlight and inspect along mattress seams, in mattress tufts and crevices, in bed frames, behind headboards, behind picture frames, in upholstered furniture seams, and any other crevice that provides a hidden nesting area. You are searching for bedbugs or evidence of bedbugs, such as light-brown molted skins from bedbug nymphs, eggshells, or dried bedbug excrement. A professional pest control technician is trained to conduct a meticulous inspection of all potential nesting sites. The investigation is vital to a strategic and successful bedbug elimination plan.

A bedbug infestation can cause substantial anxiety for tenants and homeowners. It is a wide-spread misconception that bedbug elimination requires the victim to purge their dwelling of furniture, bedding, clothing, and linens, costing thousands of dollars. Although in extreme cases a bed may need to be discarded, a professional pest control technician will educate you as to what should be disposed and what can be preserved. Your professional technician will also instruct you as to what personal items to clean and how to clean them to eliminate bedbugs and their un-hatched eggs. Although several professional treatments may be required to conquer these resilient insects, elimination can be victorious.

Prevention of bedbugs is paramount. Employ good housekeeping practices through routine cleaning and vacuuming. Always dispose of vacuum bags when they are full. Reduce clutter to eliminate possible nesting areas. Be especially skeptical of curbside furnishings. Carefully scrutinize curbside items and second-hand items including clothing, linens, and furniture before bringing them inside your home. While traveling, check the bed and furniture for signs of bedbugs, and elevate your suitcases off the floor on top of dressers or luggage racks. When packing to return home, place all of your clothing in plastic bags, launder them in hot water with detergent and place them in the dryer for at least 20 minutes. Caulk all holes in your walls and floors. By safeguarding your residence against the most common causes of bedbug infestations, the only unwelcome pests you may ever need to remove will be your in-laws.

-Mary Spinelli

Titanium Laboratories, Inc.

Phone: 877-7 TITANIUM
(1-877-784-8264)

E-mail: clientcare@titaniumlaboratories.com

Website: www.titaniumlaboratories.com