2025

Bed-Bugs.co.uk

Useful information and professional treatment solutions.

Bed Bugs Limited

Prepared by

David Cain

Workbook for remote diagnostic and triage of possible bed bug issues. V1.05

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Preface

Once this pack is completed and returned to Bed bugs Limited, we will contact you within 3 working days to provide diagnostic and outline of the next steps, this will be either:

- Identification of the likely issue if it's not bedbugs
- A suggestion to use Treatment by Passive Monitor Replacement (TbyPMR) – for light and recent introductions of bedbugs
- A treatment visit, to fix your issue

We require our potential customers to be honest and open from the start as it's the only way we can help you. To that end it is helpful for you to also prepare to work with us which would include working through the following sections of our website:

- Panicked or confused about bedbugs - Click Here
- Domestic treatment – Click Here
- Educational section – Click Here
- Psychology sections – Click Here
- Relaxation resources – Click Here
- Outline of fees – Click Here

The better you understand the issue the easier it is for you to see how working together and following our instructions is the fastest way to resolve an issue, after all we have already successfully done what you are currently trying to do.

We are unable to go through phone diagnostics without collecting this information, so we have accurate information to assess the situation from.

Introduction

As the world's first dedicated bed bug specialists are we are often called upon to investigate a problem before visiting. As so much of our work is based on detailed inspection of properties the only way we can help you is by collecting and analysis the information in a specific and consistent format.

When confirming bedbugs we look for:

- Live samples
- Cast skins
- Faecal traces

Examples images can be found in our galleries on the website:

https://www.bed-bugs.co.uk/gallery/

If you watch the inspection video you will understand where in the bed to look and how thorough you must be:

https://youtu.be/HxsYfX9S1C0?si=ppqaxzbPDT4AX7-R

Any images sent to us must be clear and in focus, it helps to place samples on lined or squared paper from above. Avoid using tape as this impacts the focus and you will not be able to get a clear image. Using clip on microscopes and macro lenses for smart phones is a great way to obtain clear quality images. Complete the table to document any images you send through.

We can only comment on evidence that is presented to us, if you are trying to identify an insect you have seen but disposed of the galleries and our insect outlines project might help you identify:

https://www.flickr.com/gp/bedbugsuk/P6r8tQ790z

Once this document has been completed and returned to the office it will be reviewed by our senior technical team and an appropriate appointment will be made to talk through the answers.

The sections marked with RED asterisks (*) are compulsory.

Failure to provide all the information will delay our response to your pack as we can't proceed without all the information required.

Property details

***Property Address:** _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

***Contact Name:** _____

***Contact Phone Number:** _____

***Contact email:** _____

Property description _____

_____

Structure type **Detached** **Semi** **Flat** **Other**

_____

When started _____

Number of rooms _____

Average daily sightings	_____	_____	_____	_____
Average daily bites	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Room 1	**Room 2**	**Room 3**	**Room 4**
Average daily sightings	_____	_____	_____	_____
Average daily bites	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Room 5	**Room 6**	**Room 7**	**Room 8**

Educational

It's not uncommon for people to not want to understand bed bugs but it's one of those issues where if you take the time to learn and understand the issue you also learn how to make sure this does not become an issue again.

We are all familiar with the phrase "*An ounce of prevention is worth a ton of cure*" well, that is never truer than with bed bugs.

Bed bugs are blood feeding parasites that preferentially feed on humans. They are a persistent pest and have developed a number of highly evolved abilities to remain close to humans until they find a new home.

They are a pest of exposure and only arrive in your home if you have come into contact with them external to the property or if an adjoining property has a significant infestation and is doing the wrong things to try and control it.

Close up of an adult bed bug, when fed they become oval in shape but are usually only seen when they are thin and flat. Picture used with permission of Richard Naylor

Close up a juvenile bed bug, the characteristic dark brown colour develops as the bed bug matures and younger samples may appear translucent.

Close up a refugia showing many of the classic signs of bed bugs, live samples, cast skins and faecal trace signs.

Close up of a bed slat illustrating a build-up of faecal traces and some egg casings close to the joint in the wood.

Bed bugs have been documented as pests since the 17th century although they have been around for much longer and most likely followed man out of the cave's millennia ago. Bed bugs were common in the UK prior to World War II, after which time widespread use of synthetic insecticides such as DDT and public education greatly reduced their numbers, at one stage though in the 1930's 30% of all homes in London were infested. However, the first resistance issues with DDT were reported in the 1960's with most strains of bed bugs now being heavily resistant to chemical products.

In the recent decades, bed bugs have begun making a comeback across the world, although they are not considered to be a major pest or health hazard, they can be highly unpleasant to live with and can cause a severe lack of sleep. International travel and commerce are thought to facilitate the spread because eggs, young, and adult bed bugs are readily transported in luggage, clothing, bedding, and furniture. Bed bugs can infest airplanes, ships, trains, and buses, recent cases that we have worked on have been traced back to travel where the source was identified to be the return journey rather than an infested room.

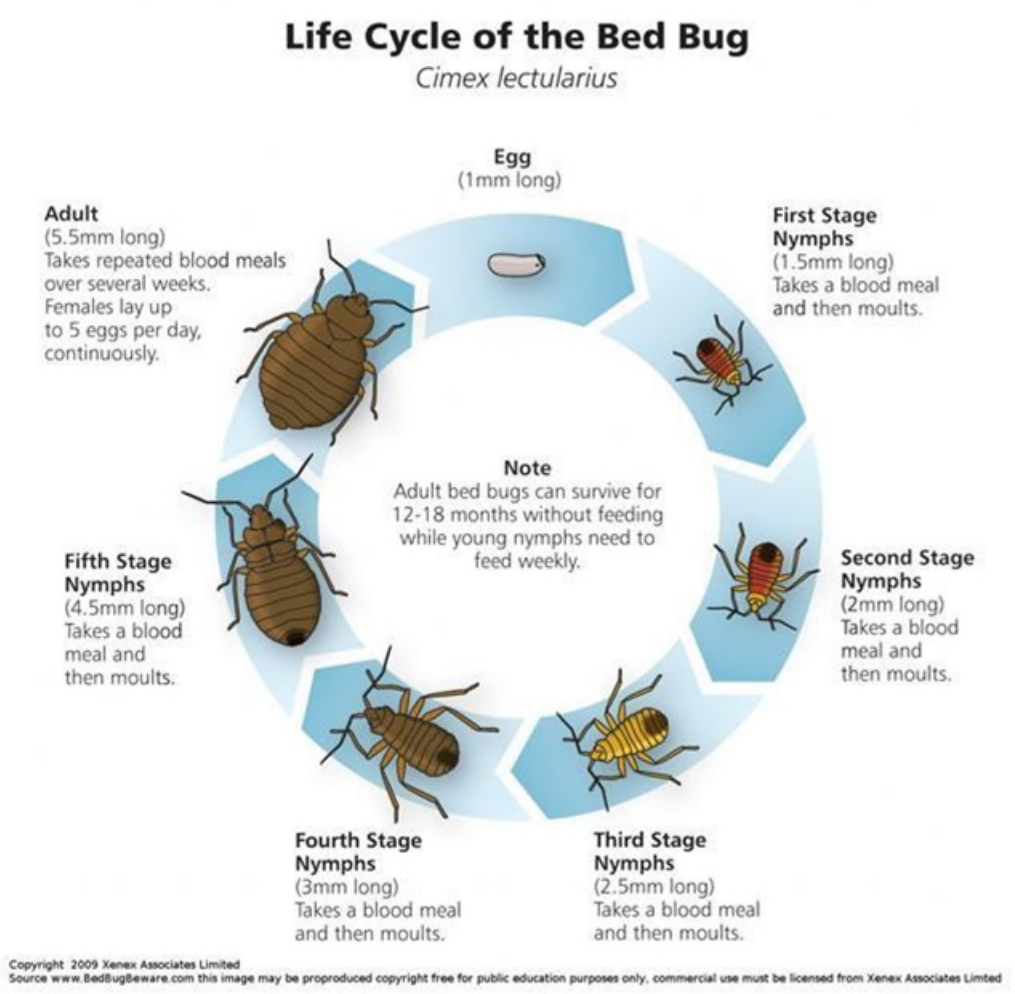
Bed bugs are most frequently found in dwellings with a high rate of occupant turnover, such as hotels, motels, hostels, dormitories, shelters, apartment complexes, tenements, and prisons. Such infestations usually are not a reflection of poor hygiene or bad housekeeping but that a previous occupant had come into contact with them at some stage.

What used to be uncommon is now a regular occurrence in some parts of London as evident from dumped beds and mattresses in the streets which is also a sign that people are not dealing with the issue correctly. When we see neighbourhoods with extensive issues, we also understand that they may all be "getting bed bugs" in a similar way to each other even if they are a few streets apart.

Life Cycle

Female bed bugs lay from one to twelve eggs per day, and the eggs are deposited on rough surfaces or in crack and crevices. The eggs are coated with a sticky substance, so they adhere to the surface which once dry makes they very hard to remove. Eggs hatch in around 10 days, and nymphs can immediately begin to feed. They require a blood meal in order to molt and develop into the next stage. Bed bugs reach maturity after five molts. Developmental time (egg to adult) is affected by temperature and takes about 21 days at 30°C to 120 days at 18°C. The nymphal period is greatly prolonged when food is scarce. The adult's lifespan may encompass 12-18 months and they are known to be able to survive for 12 months between feeds although if a source of food is present, they will always be active.

Through experience and understanding the life cycle of bed bugs we can help determine how long the problem has been present and in some cases what the likely source is. In many cases along with following the instructions in this workbook this information is important to resolving your problem quickly and efficiently.



Habits

Bed bugs are fast moving insects that tend to be most active at night when we rest; they are not however nocturnal; they feed on blood using a piercing mouth part the entry of which is often unnoticed. Nymphs may become engorged with blood within three minutes, whereas a full-grown bedbug usually feeds for ten to fifteen minutes. They then crawl away to a hiding place to digest the meal; a full meal may take 3 or 4 days to digest.

Bed bugs hide during the day in dark protected sites, they prefer fabric, wood, and paper surfaces. They usually occur in fairly close proximity to the host, although they can travel great distances if needed. Bed bugs initially can be found about tufts, seams, and folds of mattresses, later spreading to crevices in the bedstead. In heavier infestations, they also may occupy hiding places further from the bed. They may hide in window and door frames, electrical boxes, floor cracks, baseboards, furniture, and under the tack board of wall-to-wall carpeting. Bed bugs often crawl upward to hide in pictures, wall hangings, drapery pleats, loosened wallpaper, cracks in plaster, and ceiling mouldings.

Injury

The bite is often painless at the time but can cause the skin to become irritated and inflamed. Individuals differ greatly in both the extent and timing of their response to a bite. A small, hard, swollen, white welt may develop at the site of each bite which can occur in rows or batches of three or four but also in single reactions. This is often accompanied by severe itching that lasts for several hours to days, in rare cases an allergic reaction may follow, in such cases seek medical attention immediately. The morphology of bites is highly variable, and it is almost impossible to diagnose on bites alone.

It is believed that 1 in 10 people show no signs of biting, often leading to the myth that they only attack certain people and about 60% of people do not appear to show signs at the start of an infestation. Cases of extreme reaction seem to be on the increase and affect as many as 2 in 10 people. Given the extent of some of the documented infestation in people's homes, it is clear that waiting for bites to indicate an issue is too unreliable and results in infestations which progress beyond simple and fast control.

Confirming signs

There are only four easily confirmed signs of bed bugs, these are:

- Live samples – although cryptic in nature and small at the nymphal stage they are detectable by those with good eyesight.
- Cast Skins – due to the incomplete metamorphic life cycle of bed bugs they must shed skins between blood meals to develop. This can be a good indication of how long an infestation is present.
- Faecal traces – as bed bugs must defecate after a blood meal and often just before entering a refugia these are the most indicative sign of their presence and can be a good indicator of their locations.
- Eggs – although bed bug eggs are very hard to see with the untrained eye they are none the less visible and can be found.

The following are considered to be non-confirming signs:

- Bites – this is because not everyone initially responds to the bites of bed bugs, this fact explains why some infestations can go undetected infestation for so long and why screening for early detection is such an essential step in an integrated bed bug management system.
- Blood spots on sheets – an equally variable sign not only due to the different types of blood spots but also due to the fact that not everyone continues to bleed from the puncture wound.

Prevention – don't bring any more home

If you do in fact have bed bugs, it's important to think about what the potential sources are to where practical and possible avoid contact with them until you know they are "all clear".

Sources can include (tick those that could apply):

- ☐ Public transport – bus / train /
- ☐ Work / office
- ☐ School
- ☐ Libraries
- ☐ Cinemas
- ☐ Hotels
- ☐ Hospitals
- ☐ Personal vehicles
- ☐ Adjoining neighbours

The more frequently you travel the greater level of awareness and avoidance you need to take, although it may seem a pain and added chore, but it can literally save months of anguish and anxiety.

Early detection – your best line of defence

Passive Monitors are the most effective way to confirm bedbugs, they can show signs within 12-72 hours of installation or introduction of bed bugs although we recommend only checking weekly or monthly to allow signs to be easily confirmed and to not feed anxiety.

Further information on them can be found on the website:

https://www.bed-bugs.co.uk/passive-monitors/

Should you have questions about completing the rest of this form please direct them via email to:

info@bed-bugs.co.uk

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Evidence

Please complete this table with one line per image you send through. Do not send images of skin reaction, these are symptoms are will be dealt with in the next section.

File name	Room	Area	Internal use	
			ID	Dur.

Symptoms

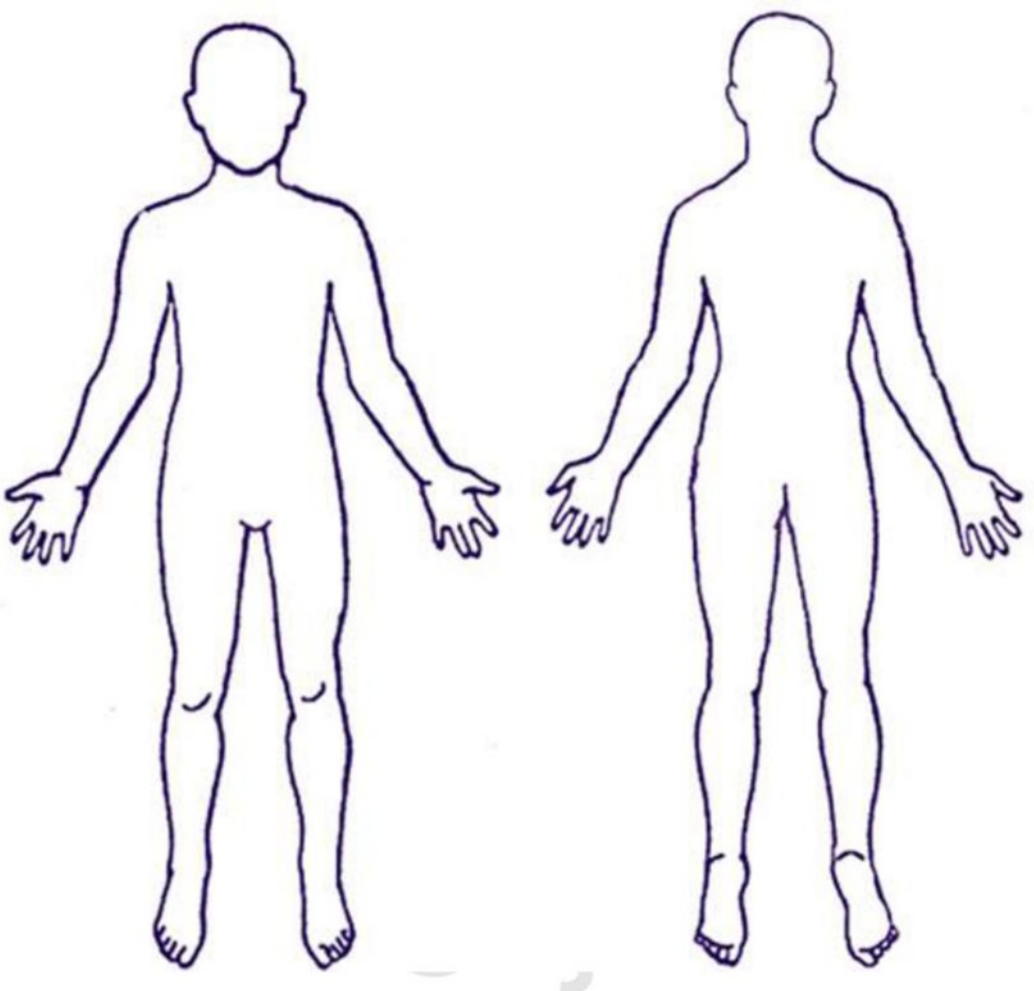
Mark the locations of skin reactions on the outlines below, ideally noting the date of occurrence so we can best work out the pattern. Use one page per person showing symptoms.

Persons name: _____

Age: _____

Room ID: _____

Medications: _____



Notes:

Complete one outline per occupant of the property:

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Next Steps

Send the completed pack along with any images or a link to a common file sharing platform via email to:

info@bed-bugs.co.uk

Once we have reviewed the completed pack, we will be able to establish based on data what is the appropriate method to resolve the problem, broadly speaking this can include:

- Identification of bedbugs, in which case we will communicate the options for your next steps.
- A short list of other possible causing along with how to resolve them.
- Recommendations as to what the next best steps are to resolve the issue.

Either way as soon as we have an idea, we will email you initial results and arrange a time for a more complete briefing and discussion of options.

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Internal use only

Case review

Please ensure that all sections are complete prior to submitting this case for review:

- ☐ Completed by client.
- ☐ Evidence
- ☐ Symptoms

Review

- ☐ Evidence
- ☐ Symptoms

BB Y/N	CB Y/N	DM/CD Y/N	Other

Conclusion

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