

## Bed Bug Control Methods Q&A

### 1. What are bed bugs ?

Ans. Bed bugs, or bedbugs, are parasitic insects from the genus *Cimex*. Bed bugs associated with human living can be classified into *Cimex lectularius* (the common bed bug) and *Cimex hemipterus* (the tropical bed bug). The life cycle of bed bugs typically lasts for a year, and the number of eggs laid by female bed bugs, ranging from 200 to 400, depends on factors such as food availability and temperature.

### 2. Where are bed bugs from ? Where do they hide ?

Ans. Due to frequent international travel, people returning from abroad may unintentionally bring bed bugs back home if not vigilant. Bed bugs often hide in cracks or crevices in walls and floors, or they may be concealed under the mattress or in old furniture. Bed bugs typically feed on blood just before dawn, sucking for about 5 to 10 minutes each time. During the day, they hide in sheltered places to slowly digest the blood they have consumed. Bed bug bites are extremely itchy and can persist for 1-2 weeks. For typical swelling caused by bed bug bites, topical anti-itch medication can be used. However, in severe cases, the patient should seek medical attention.

### 3. How to avoid bringing bed bugs home?

Ans.

#### 1. Returning from abroad:

(1) While traveling abroad, check the beds and bedding in the living area for signs of bed bugs or their excrement (bloodstains).

(2) After returning home from a trip abroad, immediately wash clothes and check luggage to prevent bringing bed bugs home.

#### 2. Home environment inspection and management:

#### (1) Environmental inspection

- \* Check areas such as bedspread, bed sheet, pillowcase, carpet, under the mattress, under the bed frame, wallpaper seams, and along bed edges for signs of bed bugs or their excrement (bloodstains).
- \* Before bringing second-hand furniture home, check for any signs of bed bugs.

#### (2) Environmental management

- \* Regularly wash bedspreads, bed sheets, and pillowcases.
- \* Vacuum carpets frequently.
- \* Ensure that seams in wallpaper are properly sealed.
- \* Fill wall crevices.
- \* Reduce the accumulation of clutter.

#### 4. How to handle bed bugs found at home ?

Ans. Bed bugs found at home can be handled using the following methods:

- (1) **Sun exposure** : Place straw mats or boxes found with bed bugs in a plastic bag and tightly seal it for sun exposure. When the temperature reaches 65°C, it can help exterminate bed bugs.
- (2) **Washing** : Clothes suspected to have bed bugs can be placed together in a plastic bag. Seal the bag tightly to prevent bed bugs from escaping. Then, launder the bagged clothes in a washing machine.
- (3) **Steaming (heat treatment)** : Use a hot steam iron to exterminate bed bugs.
- (4) **Catching (vacuum cleaner)** : Regularly use the vacuum

cleaner to capture bed bugs. This can effectively help eliminate bed bugs.

(5) **Use legal environmental agents** : If opting for chemical control, purchase a general use environmental agent registered by the Ministry of Environment for controlling bed bugs. Currently, there are six general use environmental agent permits and two restricted use environmental agent permits approved for bed bug control. When implementing pest control practices, personnel shall pay attention to their safety. When the existence of bed bugs is more extensive or severe, consider hiring a qualified pest control operator for professional assistance.

5. Are the foreign media reports about the widespread infestations and pesticide resistance of bed bugs true?

Ans.

- 1 .Media reports suggest that bed bugs in European and American countries have developed resistance to pyrethroid-based pesticides. Following consultation with Professor Emeritus Err-Lieh Hsu from National Taiwan University, a member of the Administration' s Environmental Agent Management Expert Consultation Committee, it is understood that bed bugs are nuisance insects and can easily travel with luggage. However, the assertion that bed bugs imported from abroad have developed resistance to pesticides has not been confirmed yet.
- 2 .In Taiwan, general use environmental agents approved for controlling bed bugs have undergone efficacy tests to ensure their effectiveness. These tests include not only pyrethroid-based pesticides (e.g., deltamethrin, tetramethrin, pyrethrins, permethrin, bifenthrin, etc.) but also neonicotinoids-based pesticides (such as imidacloprid). The public can choose products based on their needs.