

In my last article, I talked a bit about bed bugs. We talked a little about how those little guys can hitch hike into your house. I had said that buying/trading at garage sales, Facebook markets, and Craigslist are now the number one way that bed bugs can get into your house. I also briefly described what bed bugs looked like.

This article will talk about how to determine if you have bed bugs or not. Bites are typically the first symptom that people notice, but don't assume that just because you think you aren't being bitten that you are free of bed bugs. Bed bugs usually bite at night. When they bite they release an anticoagulant which keeps the blood from clotting making it much easier for the blood to flow while they are feeding. This anticoagulant is what causes the itchy, red welts or rashes in the bite areas. There are many people who have no reaction to the anticoagulant, therefore, they don't notice the bites and an infestation could potentially get out of control.

That being said, it would be a good idea to learn what signs to look for so that you can identify the problem so that you can take action. Remember, bed bugs are nocturnal so it's possible that they are there and you will never see the actual bug.

The first place to inspect for bed bugs is, of course, the bed. Pull back your sheets, blankets, and spreads. Look for blood smears or possibly even a dead bug. Remember these little blood suckers are feeding on you while you are sleeping. As you move in your sleep it is very likely that you might squash a bug or two, leaving blood stains behind. As disgusting as this sounds, yes, you might be sleeping in mashed bed bugs and the squashed body parts and blood they leave behind.

Another area that needs to be inspected is the mattress and the box springs. Strip the sheets off and look very closely at the mattress, especially the seams, handles, buttons, and other creases. It is very possible that you would find a live bug or two hiding in those areas. Also, look for the bug's fecal matter, which will look like small black spots around those areas. In many inspections you could very well find bed bug eggs, which are translucent and about the size of a small grain of rice.

Don't just focus on the bed with your inspections. These nasty little creatures can be found in every room. Look for the small black fecal spots around any crack or crevices around the walls and floors. They are very often hiding in electric socket or even fire alarms, so look those areas over for signs of bugs. Dresser drawers and closets are also a very common place to find signs of bugs also.

Lastly, check your clothes, especially if you know you have been someplace where bed bugs might be. They can hitch hike in pockets, shoes, and under collars to get to their next location. Don't let that be to your home or office.

As always, if you have any questions feel free to call me at 318-251-5134.