

## BED BUGS

### STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

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#### Scope of SOP

The scope of the SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) for dealing with bed bugs in a hotel encompasses all the necessary steps and protocols to effectively identify, manage, and prevent bed bug infestations within the hotel premises. This SOP outlines the specific responsibilities, procedures, and measures to be taken by hotel staff and management to address bed bug incidents promptly and comprehensively. Key aspects of the scope include:

#### Bed bugs and what it is?

Bed bugs are small, reddish-brown insects that feed on the blood of humans and animals. They are parasites that belong to the Cimicidae family. Adult bed bugs are typically about the size of an apple seed, with flat, oval-shaped bodies. After feeding, they become swollen and reddish in colour.

Bed bugs are primarily active at night and often hide in cracks and crevices in and around beds, hence their name. However, they can also be found in other furniture, upholstery, and even in electrical outlets or behind wallpaper. They are attracted to warmth and carbon dioxide, which humans emit during sleep.

Bed bug bites can cause itching and irritation, and while they are not known to transmit diseases to humans, their presence can lead to significant discomfort and distress. Infestations are commonly found in places where there is frequent turnover of people, such as hotels, hostels, apartments, and homes. Infestations can spread rapidly if not detected and treated promptly.

Due to their resilience and ability to hide in small spaces, bed bugs can be challenging to eradicate completely. Effective control usually requires a combination of methods, including thorough cleaning, pesticide treatment, and preventive measures. Regular inspection and early detection are crucial for managing and preventing bed bug infestations.

#### Symptoms of bed bugs

Symptoms of bed bug infestations typically manifest in several ways:

**Skin Reactions:** Bed bug bites often cause red, itchy welts or bumps on the skin. These reactions may appear individually or in clusters, and they can vary in size and shape. Some individuals may not react to bed bug bites at all, while others may experience severe itching and discomfort.

**Visible Signs:** In addition to bites, other visible signs of bed bugs include blood stains on sheets or pillowcases from inadvertently squashing bed bugs while sleeping, dark or rust-coloured spots of bed bug excrement on bedding or nearby surfaces and shed skins or eggshells in areas where bed bugs hide.

**Bed Bug Presence:** While bed bugs are small and adept at hiding, they can sometimes be seen with the naked eye. Adult bed bugs are about the size and shape of an apple seed, with flat, reddish-brown bodies. They may be found hiding in mattress seams, bed frames, furniture crevices, or other dark, secluded areas near where people sleep.

**Odour:** In severe infestations, bed bugs can produce a distinct, musty odour. This odour is often described as sweet or sickly and may be particularly noticeable in heavily infested areas.

It's important to note that the presence of these symptoms alone may not necessarily confirm a bed bug infestation, as other pests or skin conditions could cause similar symptoms. If you suspect a bed bug infestation based on these symptoms, it's advisable to conduct a thorough inspection of your bedding, furniture, and living spaces or consult with a pest control professional for confirmation and appropriate treatment.

## How to treat bed bugs

Treating bed bug infestations typically involves a combination of methods aimed at killing bed bugs, removing their hiding places, and preventing future infestations. here are some common strategies for treating bed bugs:

1. Professional pest control treatment:
  - Engage a licensed pest control professional experienced in bed bug extermination.
  - Pest control professionals may use a variety of methods, including chemical treatments, heat treatments, steam treatments, and/or vacuuming to eliminate bed bugs from infested areas.
  - Professional treatment is often the most effective way to address severe infestations.
2. chemical treatments:
  - Insecticides specifically labelled for bed bug control may be applied to infested areas by professionals.
  - These treatments may include sprays, dusts, or aerosols, and they are typically applied to cracks and crevices where bed bugs hide.
  - Follow all instructions and safety precautions provided by the pesticide label and ensure that treatments are carried out by trained professionals.
3. Heat treatment:
  - Heat treatment involves raising the temperature in infested areas to a level that is lethal to bed bugs.

- This method typically involves the use of specialized equipment to heat infested rooms to temperatures above 120°F (49°C) for several hours.
  - Heat treatment can effectively kill bed bugs and their eggs throughout the treated area, including cracks and crevices where chemical treatments may not reach.
4. Steam treatment:
- Steam treatment involves using steam machines to apply high-temperature steam to infested areas.
  - Steam can penetrate cracks and crevices, killing bed bugs and their eggs on contact.
  - This method is effective for treating mattresses, box springs, furniture, and other items where bed bugs may hide.
5. Vacuuming and cleaning:
- Thoroughly vacuum infested areas, including mattresses, box springs, furniture, baseboards, and carpets.
  - Dispose of vacuum bags in sealed plastic bags to prevent bed bugs from escaping.
  - Wash bedding, linens, and clothing in hot water and dry them on the hottest setting to kill bed bugs and their eggs.
6. Encasements:
- Encase mattresses, box springs, and pillows in bed bug-proof encasements to prevent bed bugs from infesting these items or escaping from existing infestations.
  - Encasements should be labelled as bed bug-proof and zippered tightly to prevent bed bugs from entering or escaping.
7. Decluttering and sealing:
- Reduce clutter in infested areas to eliminate hiding places for bed bugs.
  - Seal cracks and crevices in walls, floors, and furniture to prevent bed bugs from hiding and reinfesting treated areas.
8. Follow-up inspections and treatments:
- Schedule follow-up inspections with pest control professionals to monitor for any remaining bed bugs or new infestations.
  - Repeat treatments as necessary to ensure complete eradication of bed bugs.

It's essential to address bed bug infestations promptly and thoroughly to prevent them from spreading and causing further discomfort. Consulting with a professional pest control service is often the most effective way to ensure successful treatment and prevention of bed bugs.