

## **BED BUGS - Pest Control Advice**

### Description

Bedbugs are flat, oval shaped, blood-feeding insects that are normally reddish brown in colour. The adult bedbug is approximately 5 mm in length, and has three stages in its life cycle, egg, nymph, adult. The mouth is well adapted for piercing and sucking. Bedbugs feed on human blood and feed every 3 – 5 days. The adult bedbug may live between 9 – 18 months at normal room temperature.

Bedbugs are more active at night and infestations occur mainly in bedroom and lounge areas. These insects need to be where the host is going to be for extended periods. They hide in the frame of the headboard of the bed, cracks in woodwork or plaster, behind peeling wallpaper and behind bedroom furniture. In the lounge they are often found around the arm joints of armchairs and settees.

The bite from these insects can be very irritating. Most people suffer irritation and loss of sleep as a result of bites from these insects.

### Prevention

If you are considering buying second-hand furniture, check it thoroughly before bringing it home. Tell-tale signs apart from seeing the insects will be spotting on the furniture, usually on the back of the item or around the joints. These spots are the droppings of the bedbug.

### Control Measures

You will need professional help getting rid of bedbugs. The rooms where the host sleeps and the lounge areas will need to be treated with insecticide. This will include beds and soft-furnishings. You should be aware that often it is necessary to remove or make holes in the material normally found under divan beds and lounge furniture, to provide an effective treatment. The premises may need more than one treatment to control the problem. Redecorating, removal or introduction of new furniture should be avoided until some time after the treatment in order that any hatching bugs will walk over the insecticide and so prevent re-infestation. The Council's Environmental Services Division offers a treatment service for residents in Crawley. An appointment can be booked by telephoning 01293 438000