

# A Guide to SAFELY CONTROLLING PESTS in your HOME

Pests in your home can cause a variety of health problems for you and your family, including asthma, infections caused by rat bites, and salmonellosis. *Cockroaches can cause asthma symptoms to get worse.*

**Take the following steps** to prevent and get rid of pests in your home and keep your family safe:

## STEP 1: CLEANING

### Reduce clutter:

- ✓ Store extra clothing/linens in sealed plastic bags or containers
- ✓ Clean out cabinets of clutter and old food
- ✓ Take out trash every day
- ✓ Bag and tie garbage; place it in a container with a tight-fitting lid

### Vacuum

- ✓ Starting at the ceiling, work your way down to the floor
- ✓ Behind and under appliances
- ✓ Inside gaps and holes in the walls
- ✓ Inside cabinets
- ✓ Seal & discard vacuum bag when done

### Wash hard surfaces:

- ✓ Fill two buckets with warm water (one with soap and one just water for rinsing)
- ✓ Use a sponge with a plastic scouring pad and change water often
- ✓ Clean all surfaces where food is stored or eaten: counter tops, tables, drawers, cabinets, and inside rubber seal on refrigerator door
- ✓ Use a cleaning solution for tough stains

### Clean small appliances:

- ✓ • Unplug appliances and vacuum them out (i.e. toasters, microwaves, and clocks).

## STEP 2: ELIMINATE ALL HIDING SPOTS

- ✓ Seal cracks with 100% silicone caulk in walls, floors, around tub, sink, inside cabinets, around water heater and piping (underneath kitchen sink)
- ✓ Stuff holes with steel wool or copper mesh to prevent rodent chewing and then fill with spackle or joint compound
- ✓ Attach door sweeps to bottom of doors leading to the outside
- ✓ Use mesh screens in bathroom and kitchen vents to block the entry of pests

## STEP 3: ELIMINATE FOOD/WATER SOURCES

- ✓ Store all foods and pet foods in tight fitting plastic or glass containers
- ✓ Fix leaks
- ✓ Use garbage cans with tight fitting lids, clean often and take out trash every night

**PESTICIDES** are poisons and can be harmful to humans and animals and should be a last resort. To protect your family:

- ✓ NEVER buy pesticides without a label or from street vendors
- ✓ AVOID foggers and sprays as they “go everywhere” even places you eat, sleep, and play
- ✓ MAKE SURE that whenever pesticides are used, the area is well ventilated and family members with asthma are out. Open your windows!
- ✓ ALWAYS follow the directions on the manufacturer’s label



**\*Never mix bleach and ammonia products! Follow instructions on labels.**

**\*For poison emergencies contact the American Association of Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222.**

# BED BUGS

Bed bugs are insects that feed on human blood at night while people are sleeping. They have small oval bodies and are rust colored. They are a nuisance, but are not known to spread disease.

## WHERE CAN YOU FIND Bed Bugs?

- ✓ Along the seams of mattresses and inside the box spring, along bedroom baseboard cracks
- ✓ Behind the headboard, in and around nightstands, on nearby furniture (they are usually within a 15 foot radius of the bed)
- ✓ Inside loose wallpaper, along cluttered areas

Remember that bedbugs can live for one whole year without a meal!

## DO YOU HAVE BED BUGS IN YOUR MATTRESS?



*Mattress infested with bed bugs. Check your mattress for infestation.*

## HOW DO I KNOW I HAVE Bed Bugs?

- They will leave large itchy skin welts usually on the arms, legs, and torso
- They will leave blood stains that will look like small rust spots on mattresses



## HOW DO I GET RID of Bed Bugs?

- ✓ Thoroughly wash bedding, linens, and clothes in hot water; dry on the highest dryer setting.
- ✓ Clean rugs or carpets with soap and hot water
- ✓ Scrub mattress seams with a stiff brush to dislodge bed bugs and their eggs
- ✓ Vacuum bed and nearby furniture; throw away vacuum bag when finished
- ✓ Clean clutter from your house
- ✓ Place mattresses inside waterproof, zippered cover labeled "allergen rated" and leave on for at least one year
- ✓ Dispose of infested items that cannot be cleaned
- ✓ Repair any wall cracks or loose wallpaper
- ✓ For more persistent infestations utilize a licensed pest control company that will use the least toxic pesticide
- ✓ Treat mattresses and sofas by applying solution in SEAMS ONLY, not on top where people sit or sleep
- ✓ ALWAYS inspect luggage and clothing when returning home from a trip; check any used furniture before purchasing
- ✓ NEVER bring discarded furniture items into your home

## For additional information about rodents, see:

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention  
[www.cdc.gov/rodents](http://www.cdc.gov/rodents)

## For additional information about bed bugs see:

The Environmental Protection Agency  
[www.epa.gov/pesticides/bedbugs](http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/bedbugs)

**To report Housing COMPLAINTS\* call:** (831) 755-4505

or you can submit an online health complaint at  
[www.mtyhd.org/eh-concern-form](http://www.mtyhd.org/eh-concern-form) .