



Which Bed Bug Treatment works Best?

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Bed bugs are one of the worst pests anyone can have the misfortune of getting. While they are not known to carry any serious diseases, bed bug infestations will literally keep you up at night with itchy bites, allergic reactions, secondary infections due to scratching, and mental health impacts including anxiety and insomnia, among others.

To make matters worse, once they've gotten into a building, a bed bug infestation can be next to impossible to eliminate without the proper tools and training. Bed bugs are small in size, excellent climbers, and prolific breeders. When these three factors are taken into account, it makes for a pest that can get into almost anywhere and quickly multiply, overwhelming the building's occupants. Their quick breeding also means that, should your initial treatment attempt fail to eliminate every bed bug present, you can rest assured that they'll be back to full force in a matter of days.

When it comes to dealing with bed bugs, most homeowners can't do it on their own, leaving them no choice but to turn to a professional for help. In this consumer guide, we'll take a closer look at the types of bed bug treatments on the market, their individual pros and cons, and things you need to consider when bed bugs bite.

Bed Bug Treatment Options

Most pest control providers that treat bed bugs will do so using one of two methods: Conventional treatments and Heat treatments. Each treatment method has its own pros and cons, listed below.

Conventional Treatments

In a conventional bed bug treatment, your pest control technician will perform a thorough inspection of your home for any signs of bed bug activity in order to find out where they're coming from and what parts of the home they might have already gotten to. After identifying any hot spots for activity throughout your home, he or she will then administer insecticide to these areas that will kill any bed bugs that come into contact with it.

The biggest advantage with conventional bed bug treatment is convenience. Conventional treatments are typically more affordable and require less prep time than other treatment options, and can be completed more quickly. Modern bed bug insecticides also provide a residual effect that not only kills bed bugs in the present but also helps prevent them in the future.

The only real con with conventional treatments is that they may not eliminate the entire problem at once, requiring return visits for complete protection. This is due mostly to the difficulty that comes with

identifying and accessing every area the bed bugs have gotten into, especially when it comes to their miniscule eggs which can be difficult to see even for trained professionals. However, this con may be mitigated depending on the warranty structure your pest control company offers - many guarantee services for up to 30 days while some provide an ongoing warranty for an additional fee.

It is important to note that certain green approaches to bed bug treatment exist, notably Aprehend® and silica dust, that produce excellent results against bed bugs while having minimal impact on human health. For the best results, ask your prospective treatment provider what chemicals they use and do your research prior to signing on.

Heat Treatments

In a bed bug heat treatment, your technician will use heaters to raise the temperature within your home to about 140 degrees Fahrenheit, hot enough to kill bed bugs at each of their life stages. If bed bugs are anywhere in the home, they will be eliminated.

Heat treatments are not without their drawbacks. Heat treatments are more expensive and more time-consuming than conventional treatment methods, and require more preparation on the part of the homeowner to ensure that their belongings are not damaged in the process. They also do not provide the residual effects that insecticides will, and rarely come with a warranty after service completion. If bad personal habits are the cause of your infestation, there's no insurance that the problem won't occur later on.

However, many of these disadvantages are offset by the sheer effectiveness that heat treatments provide. Warranties often aren't offered because they're so seldom required - you pay more upfront to save yourself from paying for repeat treatments later. Heat treatments also come with the peace of mind that no chemicals are being used in your home.

In particular, heat treatments are best for extremely large infestations that would require so much insecticide and follow-up treatment as to make conventional treatment methods practically useless at eliminating the infestation as a whole. The more severe your infestation, the better heat treatment might be for your situation.

Take note that some companies that use heat treatments will also apply insecticides as an additional layer of protection. If you are hesitant about insecticides being used in your home, check with your prospective pest control provider prior to service to ensure you know exactly what your service plan entails.

Canine Inspections

Certain pest control providers offer bed bug inspections using specially-trained bed bug dogs that can sniff out bed bugs anywhere they might be found throughout the home. While this service is often expensive and difficult to find, bed bug dogs can maximize the effectiveness of traditional treatments and help ensure you get the most thorough treatment for your home.

Between their small size and primarily nocturnal lifestyle, they can be very difficult to detect with the naked eye. Dogs can mitigate both of these survival advantages using their strong sniffers, which are highly accurate at detecting bed bugs at each of their life stages, from eggs to nymphs to adults. Another

benefit is their speed, as bed bugs can cover entire buildings in only a fraction of the time it takes for humans to perform a visual inspection. Their noses are also adept at identifying smaller clusters of bed bugs that could go unnoticed, helping the technician eliminate a bed bug problem in its infancy before it can become a severe infestation.

Canine inspections are not a treatment themselves, but can be a powerful inspection tool when used in conjunction with other methods. While most typical conventional and heat treatments will be adequate to eliminate bed bugs from a residential home, bed bug dogs can be a huge benefit to larger multi-unit commercial structures like apartment buildings, hotels, motels, hospitals, and schools.

Bed Bug Warranties

Due to the nature of bed bugs and their tendency to re-emerge shortly after an ineffective treatment, many pest control companies offer special warranties that will keep you covered should the problem return.

As a consumer, you'll want to do your homework to ensure that you're protected. While not all companies provide warranties for bed bug services, those that do typically offer warranties on a one-month or an ongoing basis. Keep in mind that while one month is generally enough to know if the problem has returned, bed bugs can strike anywhere, anytime - so the longer you're protected, the better.

Bed bugs are a problem that will never go away on their own yet impossible for most homeowners to face alone. When it comes to bed bugs, professional treatment is a necessity - but you need to know exactly what you're paying for if you want to take care of the problem for good.