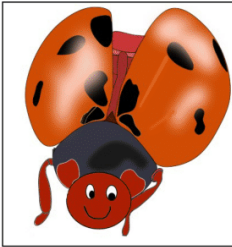


Dear Aunt Winnie,

My granddaughter lives in Boston and she called me the other night to tell me that her apartment has bed bugs! I have not heard about bed bugs in years! She says they are becoming very common especially in the cities. Is this true? What is the best way to get rid of them?

Sincerely,  
Shocked

Disclaimer-The opinions expressed by Aunt Winnie are by no means professional nor do they reflect Aging Services, Inc. beliefs or ideas. Her opinions are strictly for reader enjoyment only!



Dear Shocked,

When I was a young child I used to visit my grandma in New York. I had fond memories of her reading me bedtime stories and afterwards tucking me in. She never failed to say "Sleep tight, don't let the bed bugs bite!". Now in my naïve young mind I envisioned cute lady bugs playfully pinching me. Boy was I in for a shock when my grandma told me the "real" truth behind bed bugs. I was horrified to learn they had been running amok in houses a few decades before I was born searching for a body to feast on. I remember

being very relieved that humans had modernized enough in my era that we could kiss those beasties good bye. Well, I guess I was fooled as well as everyone else in the country. Can you believe those nasty critters went into covert operations and sometime in the 1990's they re-emerged ready to wage war? Worse yet, their forces have been growing ever since. They have not only infiltrated our homes but every living space conceivable. To top it all off they are experts at hiding and often hitch rides on our belongings! According to the EPA, it is a pure myth that bed bugs prefer dirty places. There is no safe place. Infestations have been found even in 5 star hotels and luxury cruise liners. There is absolutely no reason to be ashamed if bed bugs make an appearance at your doorstep and the only reason they are at your doorstep is because you provide dinner. It is awful to think our blood is their diet, but if you are one of those people that see a rainbow after every storm then you will be happy to know a bed bug doesn't transmit diseases. Although their bite can leave a red itchy welt, it is fairly harmless unless you happen to be allergic to it or get a secondary infection from scratching it.



Unfortunately, there is no simple solution to getting rid of bed bugs. A combination of tactics is the best plan to getting rid of these pests. The EPA warns that solely using pesticides will not eliminate the problem. Here are recommendations for eradicating a bed bug infestation:

- Get rid of clutter. Bed bugs love to hide in clutter.
- Regularly wash and dry heat your bed sheets, blankets, bedspreads or any clothing that touches the floor. (Bed bugs can only be killed if their body temperature reaches 113F)
- Thoroughly vacuum all areas of your house on a frequent basis. Empty vacuum contents in a tightly sealed bag and placed in an outside garbage bin.
- Only use pesticides if you have followed the label directions. It is recommended to hire a professional.

I hope this information is helpful. For more detailed information you can go to the Environmental Protection Agency website: <https://www.epa.gov/bedbugs/>

Sincerely,  
Aunt Winnie

### **The Super Hero of the bug world—The Masked Bed Bug Hunter!**

**If there was such a thing as a super hero bug this one might be it! It is called the Masked Hunter and it hunts down bed bugs and devours them! Unfortunately the only other bugs that find bed bugs tasty are also major pests such as cockroaches and ants!**



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