



Ace Exterminating Co., Inc.

BROWN RECLUSE

True to its name, the brown recluse is both brown and reclusive. The body of an adult brown recluse is light brown, except for a darker, violin-shaped marking on the back, immediately behind its eyes. This mark helps identify the spider, though it develops as the spider does and is not present in young brown recluses. An even more important identifier is the number and arrangement of the eyes. Unlike most spiders, which have eight eyes, brown recluse spiders have six eyes arranged in three pairs. Note also that the legs of brown recluse are not spiny or banded like those of many spiders it is often confused with.

While females build flat, sheet-like webs, or “retreats,” that may help them capture prey, the brown recluse should be thought of as a hunting spider because males, in particular, roam in search of prey.

Brown recluse are most active at night. During the day they rest in hidden locations within the structures they infest. They are fond of building their retreats and resting on wooden surfaces, such as inside furniture, cardboard boxes, wall voids and in the wood framing of crawlspaces, basements and attics. They are not often found far from structures.

Most infested structures did not become so by brown recluse traveling over land from one house to another. Moreover, brown recluse do not “balloon,” that is, they do not use silk strands to disperse by wind as other spiders do. Most structures become infested when brown recluse “hitchhike” indoors on furniture, boxes and other items from infested structures. The spiders are well adapted for establishing themselves by hitchhiking. They are long-lived, can go for many months without eating, and are adapted to the hot, dry conditions found in many structures. What’s more, a female brown recluse needs to mate only once to produce eggs throughout her life, and can produce 150 or more spiderlings in a year. Thus, a single female hitchhiking into a structure is all it takes to establish an infestation. The need to inspect items before moving them in is clear.

Once established within a structure, brown recluse are often difficult to control. Though hundreds of brown recluse may be present in a house, they may not be easily observed because of their reclusive, nocturnal habits. Even when exposed, brown recluse are fast runners and difficult to catch with a vacuum cleaner, fly swatter or shoe.

Successful brown recluse control requires an integrated management plan that utilizes *several* control methods. Management plans employing only *one* means of control, such as spraying baseboards, will fail.

Help Keep Brown Recluse Out Of YOUR Home

Here are some steps you can take to help keep brown recluse out of your home:

- One valuable method is to deny the spiders access to hiding places. Typical hiding places include garages, crawlspaces, attics, wall voids, cracks and voids around fireplaces, cabinets, furniture, boxes and stored goods. The importance of eliminating clutter from the structure cannot be overemphasized. Boxes and other items stored for long periods of time are ready harborage for brown recluse. Stored goods should be eliminated or placed in plastic bags, tubs or other containers that seal tightly.
- Cracks and crevices should be sealed with caulk, expandable foam, weather stripping, screen or other materials to prevent the spiders from entering them and gaining access to structural voids (If you are having a brown recluse treatment, this should be done after the treatment is completed). Seal around fireplaces, vents, door and window frames, crawlspace and attic doors, and where cabinets, counters and baseboards meet walls, to permanently prevent brown recluse, and other pests as well, from harboring there.

Preparing For A Brown Recluse Treatment

If you are scheduled for a brown recluse treatment, here are some things you need to do BEFORE your scheduled treatment:

- If you are removing your own wall outlet covers and light switch covers to reduce the cost of your treatment, make sure ALL covers are removed.
- Move all furniture and items away from the walls.
- Empty the bottom (floor) of every closet in the home.
- Empty cabinets under sinks in the kitchen and bathrooms.

What Will Be Done During Brown Recluse Treatment

Here are some of the things we will be doing during your brown recluse treatment. NOTE: Air Conditioners and Heaters must be turned off during treatment.

- Remove all wall outlet covers and light switch covers (If they have not been removed already).
- Clean down all spider webs and eggs.
- Dust inside all walls and attic spaces.
- Treat around all plumbing under sinks.
- Treat the bottom of all closets.
- Treat along all baseboards.
- Treat under, inside and behind furniture.
- Treat all cracks and crevices.
- Treat crawl space.
- Treat outside entry points.
- Put out monitoring boards to help pinpoint any future activity.