

Pharaoh Ants

Problems They Cause

Pharaoh ants rarely bite humans, but they **pose a health risk** due to spreading germs from one place or food to another. Pharaoh ants have a love of sugary foods and fluids, including honey, jellies, soda, and syrups. However, their omnivorous menu also includes fatty foods like meats, grease, and pet food. They will also feed on blood and can actively feed from wounds and soiled dressings.

Pharaoh ants have been implicated in the **spread** of more than a dozen **disease pathogens** including Salmonella and Streptococcus Pyogenes. They are notorious for being a major nuisance in hospitals where they can enter wounds, enter IV bottles and can sometimes even seek moisture from the mouths of sleeping patients.

Commercial Control Methods

- Vergo offers a selection of treatments to effectively eradicate this difficult to treat pest. For more information contact us.

Don't try this at home!

- Do not attempt to treat pharaoh ants yourself with over the counter powders, gels, or sprays. This will only **cause the infestation** to get worse as the **nests will bud and spread**.



Pest Biology

Pharaoh ants are polygynous, meaning **each colony contains many queens**, leading to unique caste interactions and colony dynamics. This also allows the colony to **fragment into bud colonies** quickly for survival if under threat.

They have become established in many large centrally heated buildings where temperatures remain constant and warm. Due to our cold climate, they will infest any dwelling with central heating, but they are often found in blocks of flats, hospitals, care homes, student accommodation and similar large institutions.

How to identify a Pharaoh Ant

Pharaoh ants are a very small species of ant, reaching only about 2 mm in length. Their bodies range from **light yellow** to **red** in colour and they typically have red or black coloured abdomens. The queens are usually a darker colour than the worker ants. Pharaoh ants live together in very large colonies.

What you can do to help

- Keep all food items in sealed containers.
- Do not leave food scraps lying around.
- Empty bins daily removing the rubbish to your external bins and don't allow them to overflow the container.
- Regularly clean all kitchen work surfaces, especially last thing at night.
- Store all kitchen equipment in a clean state.
- Vacuum all floors regularly especially paying attention to food spills and waste.
- Pull out and clean behind and around all cookers, refrigerators, washing machines and other moveable equipment.

