

Make Handwashing a Habit!



A Food Safety Guide

We all think we know how to wash our hands but many of us don't do it properly.

Why is handwashing so important?

As the hands are in direct contact with food, they are the main route for transferring food poisoning bacteria. Keeping our hands clean is a crucial line of defence against harmful germs, and getting into the habit of washing our hands regularly will pay off by helping to achieve food safety and reducing the risk of illness. Hands must be kept very clean at all times and the correct handwashing procedure is essential.

The most basic ingredient to any recipe is:
Handwashing!

Did you know that:

- A Food Standards Agency found that 43% of people did **not** wash their hands before handling food.
- 31% of men and 17% of women did **not** wash their hands after going to the toilet.
- The number of bacteria on our hands can **double** after using the toilet.
- 1,000 times as many bacteria spread from damp hands than from dry hands.

How to wash your hands properly:

If hands aren't clean they can spread food poisoning bacteria all around the kitchen. But a quick rinse won't make sure they're really clean. So, it's important for you and anyone else preparing food to know how and when to wash your hands properly.

- Wet your hands thoroughly under warm running water and squirt liquid soap onto the palm of one hand

- Rub your hands together to make a lather

- Rub the palm of one hand along the back of the other and along the fingers. Then repeat with the other hand.

- Rub in between each of your fingers on both hands and around your thumbs.

- Rinse off the soap with clean water.

- Dry hands thoroughly on a disposable towel.

This should take between 10 and 20 seconds!

When should I wash my hands?

- Before touching and eating food.
- After handling raw foods such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs, fruit and vegetables.
- After touching or emptying rubbish bins.
- After going to the toilet.
- After playing with pets and after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.
- After any other activity likely to contaminate hands.