

# *Food Safety & Personal Hygiene*

*Good personal hygiene is, we are told, a matter of common sense, yet it remains a major reason for the spread of bacteria and potential illness. So, is there a lack of common sense, are corners being cut or is it a matter of just being reminded about the basics?*

## **Illness**

*If you are ill with a cold, cough, skin infection, septic cuts or those with discharge; a sore throat, nausea, or upset stomach you must phone in sick. If you become ill during service you must report to your supervisor who will send you home. You should not return to work until you have been given medical clearance.*

## **Washing Hands**

*Use comfortably hot water in a basin (used only for hand washing). Liquid, anti bacterial soap should be used (bars of soap may carry bacteria) - Don't forget your nails, wrists and between fingers. Rinse your hands before drying with a paper towel, air dryer or continuous clean roll towel.*

## **When to Wash Your Hands**

*Before starting work; Between touching raw or high risk food; After handling raw food; After visiting the toilet, After handling raw eggs; Coughing or sneezing, Touching your face; Using cleaning chemicals, Eating drinking or smoking.*

*Avoid touching food whenever possible - 40% of the human race carry *Staphylococcus Aureus* naturally on their body skin, nose and ears!*

*Always cover cuts and spots with a **blue waterproof**, detectable plaster and change regularly, consider suitable protective gloves or finger stools. Ensure your uniform is clean, suitable for the job and light coloured. Do not wear nail varnish or jewellery, leave it at home as it may collect dirt and or fall into the food. Wash regularly and often avoiding strong smelling deodorant or perfume. Ensure long hair is tied back and if necessary covered.*

## **Never!**

- ⇒ Cough spit or sneeze over food*
- ⇒ Touch your face or pick spots*
- ⇒ Test food with fingers*
- ⇒ Eat or smoke in food areas*
- ⇒ Blow or breath onto utensils such as cutlery or glass*

## **Bacteria**

*Bacteria are microscopic organisms found everywhere, mostly it is harmless. However, some cause illness and these are known as Pathogenic Bacteria.*

*Pathogenic bacteria including *Salmonella* make you ill when they have been inside your body for a while. However, some bacteria, such as *Staphylococcus Aureus*, produce toxins in food even before you eat it, so you are likely to feel ill soon after eating. There are also bacteria that make you ill as a result of forming spores, this is a protective coating that allows bacteria to survive harsh conditions, such as cooking, that would otherwise destroy them. Bacteria require food, moisture, warmth and time to grow and will double number every ten to twenty minutes in ideal conditions.*