

All You Need Is Gloves

Hand Hygiene 101

Get Festival Savvy This Summer

Before tucking into a burger, learn what you're really eating

Contaminated Cash

How money could be making you sick

The Battle of the Sexes

Do men or women have the best hygiene habits?



Welcome to *All You Need Is Gloves* - a magazine aimed at ensuring you're up to speed on food and hand hygiene. From the germs on your hands and in your meals to how you can stop these microbes from spreading, we've got everything you need to know and more. We also reveal the results of a survey delving into people's hygiene habits.

To join the conversation, use the hashtag **#GlovesAllYouNeed**.

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Food hygiene: know your germs

Before you tuck into a tasty burger or take a slurp of your favourite ice cold soft drink, you might want to consider the microscopic life you're about to swallow. The fact is, the food and drink we consume can be filled with bacteria, parasites and viruses, and if you're not careful, there's a risk your next meal will make you sick.

More than 250 organisms are known to lead to foodborne illnesses causing symptoms such as vomiting, stomach pains, diarrhoea and fever. They include:

Campylobacter

This type of bacteria is the most common cause of food poisoning in Britain. It's prevalent in raw meat and can be found in most raw poultry.

Salmonella

This bacteria lives in the guts of many farm animals and it can affect milk, poultry, eggs and meat - and other foods including fruit, vegetables and shellfish can become contaminated if they come into contact with sewage in water or manure in soil. Contamination can also happen if cooked and raw foods are stored side by side.

Escherichia coli (E. coli)

A type of bacteria commonly found in animal and human intestines, most forms of E. coli are harmless. However, some can lead to food poisoning. Levels of E. coli can serve as a general measure of hygiene and faecal contamination in an environment.

Listeria

Listeria bacteria can be found in a range of foods, but it's most prevalent in unpasteurised milk products, soft cheeses like brie and camembert, and ready-to-eat chilled foods including deli meats and pre-packed sandwiches.

Shigella

One of the leading causes of diarrhoea worldwide, Shigella bacteria is spread through faeces. It can be passed on directly to other people and it can also be spread by contaminated food and water.

Given how common germs like these are, you can't afford to take risks whether you're serving or eating food. It might seem shocking, but the average chopping board has 200 times more faecal bacteria on it than a toilet seat - so it's essential to take appropriate hygiene measures to keep yourself and others safe. These can include regular and thorough hand washing and wearing appropriate gloves for activities such as preparing or serving food.

54% of people we polled said they have had food poisoning, with 17% suffering this type of sickness within the last year.

Is cash a source of contamination?

More and more of us may be using cards and going contactless when paying for products including food, but the chances are you still sometimes use cash to make purchases. When you do, you might be exposing yourself to more germs than you realise.



Research from MasterCard revealed that a shocking number of bugs can be found on the money we use. The company discovered that:

- *26,000 live bacteria can be found on the average banknote.*
- *There are more germs on a typical £1 coin than a toilet seat.*
- *Nearly half of Britons admit they never wash their hands after handling money.*

Highlighting the potential hazards of eating out, a separate study by scientists at UC-Davis found that when you have a burger, fries and fizzy drink in a fast food outlet, you could be consuming up to 238,000 microbes.

On a more positive note however, [research](#) we conducted into cash hygiene suggested that the new polymer £5 notes are much cleaner than the old paper £5 notes.

54% of our survey respondents said they would be put off buying food in a restaurant if a serving area was dirty.

Perhaps surprisingly, only **6%** said a food server handling money would put them off.

59% of people said that when buying fast food, they pay attention to whether the person who prepares it is wearing gloves.



Food festivals: the facts



- Food festivals are now big business. From established events to niche gatherings celebrating anything from barbeques to Bramley apples, there's a festival to suit every taste. The largest UK events now attract up to **50,000** foodies. That's a lot of hungry mouths, and potentially a lot of germs too...
- Burgers are among the most popular foods at many festivals. Favoured by **40%** of survey respondents, these meat patties topped our list of fast food options at festivals and events, putting them ahead of other meals including hot dogs and pizzas.
- It's vital that burgers are properly handled and prepared in order to avoid the risk of contamination with harmful bacteria including E.coli and salmonella, which can be transferred to meat in abattoirs.
- Fortunately, it seems many of us are vigilant when choosing food vendors. **89%** of people we questioned said food hygiene rating is important to them when they're looking for somewhere to eat.

Poor hand hygiene and its effect on health



Even if your hands look clean, they can in fact be home to a multitude of germs. Here are just some examples of the illnesses you can spread through touch if you're not careful:

Norovirus

Also sometimes called the 'winter vomiting bug' (although it can infect people at any time of year), this is the most common cause of viral gastroenteritis. It's transmitted when people don't wash their hands properly and it can spread very quickly among large groups. This is why when one person gets it, whole offices or households can catch it too.

Colds and flu

Airborne viruses including the common cold and flu are spread when people cough and sneeze. These viruses can live on surfaces and hands for up to 24 hours, so unless people are careful, they can easily pass the illnesses onto others.

Hospital infections

Many hospital patients have compromised immune systems, making them particularly vulnerable to infections. Some of the most common infections in these environments are MRSA and E.coli, and they are often the result of patients and staff not washing their hands.

Hepatitis A

A viral infection that can cause severe symptoms including fever, pain, tiredness and problems with the liver, Hepatitis A is spread through the faecal matter of infected people. It can be passed on when people prepare food or drinks without washing their hands or wearing gloves.

Taking simple steps to improve your hand hygiene could help to protect you and others from these infections and many more.

The battle of the sexes: who has the best hygiene habits?

It's often assumed that women are more fastidious than men when it comes to personal hygiene - and research would appear to bear this out. A study conducted by a team from the London School of Hygiene And Tropical Medicine found that twice as many women as men wash their hands with soap when using public toilets.

The scientists set up online monitors in service stations to record how many people used soap when washing their hands. Of 250,000 people counted, **64% of women washed with soap compared to just 32% of men.**

To see how people's hygiene habits were affected by particular messages, the team also displayed signs in the toilets. Soap use in women and men rose by 11% and 12% respectively when the message "Is the person next to you washing with soap?" was shown.

Meanwhile, women were found to respond more strongly to reminders to wash their hands, while men were more influenced by messages that were designed to invoke disgust, such as "soap it off or eat it later".



The unsavoury truth about music festivals

- This summer might have been uncharacteristically warm and dry, but usually music festivals in the UK are awash with mud. Along with dodgy portable toilets, the distinct absence of proper showers and crowded camping areas, this makes these events the perfect breeding ground for bacteria and viruses.
- Research conducted by a team from the University of Colorado found that on average, **people carry 3,200 bacteria from 150 different species** on their hands, and this figure could be much higher at festivals. With the UK's top five music events attracting between 70,000 and 175,000 people - that's a lot of germs!
- In our survey, **89%** of respondents said they wash their hands after going to the toilet, but **10% admitted they only do this sometimes** and **1%** revealed they don't wash after using the facilities. Meanwhile, **59% of people said they're less likely to wash their hands when drinking alcohol** - which let's face it tends to be flowing during festivals...



Did you know?



- Your toilet isn't the 'germiest' place in your home. In fact, it's probably not even close. According to a study carried out by NSF International, the following areas are the most contaminated:
- Handbags can house as many as 10,000 bacteria per square inch, while a third test positive for faecal bacteria.

1. Dish sponges/ dish cloths
2. Kitchen sinks
3. Toothbrush holders
4. Pet bowls
5. Coffee maker reservoirs
6. Taps
7. Pet toys
8. Kitchen counters
9. Stove knobs
10. Chopping boards

Over a fifth of people we questioned mistakenly thought toilets harbour the most bacteria in homes.

61% *of people we surveyed admitted they use their smartphones on the toilet.*



- Taking ice in your drink in cafés and restaurants could be risking infection. An investigation carried out by The Mail on Sunday found that ice in branches of a range of popular high street eateries had higher levels of bacteria than water samples taken from the establishments' toilets.
- Your smartphone may be a health hazard. Consumer watchdog Which? swabbed 90 smartphones, tablets and keyboards and found hazardous levels of bacteria. One device had 600 units of *Staphylococcus aureus* - well above the 20 units it found on an office toilet.

Why hand hygiene matters

There's no getting around the importance of effective hand hygiene. Taking measures to stop harmful microbes from spreading can protect people from a range of health issues.

It's worth noting that each year in the UK over a million people are affected by food poisoning, according to an estimate by the Food Standards Agency. Many of these cases are likely to be the result of poor hand hygiene.

Even more worryingly, a report produced by Professor Steve Tombs of the Open University suggests that food poisoning results in

20,000 people being hospitalised per year across the country, while **500 lose their lives** as a result of these illnesses.

Then there's the variety of other illnesses that poor hygiene practices can spread, including everything from the common cold to hepatitis A.

The NHS points out that simply washing your hands with soap and water is sufficient to remove many viruses, bacteria and other microbes and it can cut the risk of diarrhoea by nearly

50%



Simple steps you can take to stay safe

Slip on a pair of gloves

There's now an array of [disposable gloves](#) to choose from to help promote hygiene in a range of environments, including if you're preparing food. From [vinyl](#), to [nitrile](#), to [polythene](#) gloves, you won't struggle to find materials that suit the tasks and level of risk you're dealing with.

These products have a range of potential benefits. For example, they can help to prevent cross contamination, protect food from direct hand contact and protect hands from harsh chemicals.

If you regularly deal with food, it's well worth checking out the selection of gloves available. Whichever you choose, follow the instructions provided with them to ensure maximum levels of hygiene.

A handwashing 101

Even if you regularly wash your hands, there's a chance you might not be getting rid of as many germs as you think.

According to the NHS, you should:

- *Wash your hands for 20 seconds*
- *Use enough soap to cover your hands*
- *Make sure you rub all parts of both hands, including your fingertips*
- *Rinse with water*
- *Dry thoroughly, if possible with a disposable towel*

You should also ensure you wash your hands after using the toilet, handling raw foods such as meat or vegetables, or coming into contact with animals. In addition, it's vital to ensure you visit the sink before you handle or eat food.

For more detailed information on how to wash your hands properly, check out our [online guide](#). We've also created a guide to [hand sanitising](#) when water and soap aren't available.

34% of respondents correctly stated that hand washing should take 20 seconds. A meticulous 42% said you should wash for 30 seconds, while at the other end of the scale, 4% suggested that 5 seconds is sufficient.

Thank you for reading this emagazine. We hope it's given you some useful insights into food and hand hygiene to help you stay safe and healthy.

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