

**Food Safety Guidance**

**Hand Contact Points**

Anything that your hands touch can pick up and pass on bacteria. These are called hand contact points. Dirty hand contact points can cause serious contamination of food, leading to food poisoning.

**What are the hand contact points in your business?**

We often find that hand contact points are not cleaned because they have not been identified as a particular problem, and therefore get missed during regular cleaning.

Typical hand contact points in a food business include:

* Refrigerator & freezer handles or door grips
* Taps at the wash hand basins and sinks
* Cupboard and drawer handles or grips
* Control knobs on cookers, machinery, slicers etc.
* Weighing machine controls
* Room door handles and door edges
* Probe thermometer casing
* Telephone receivers in food rooms
* Cash till controls
* Waste bin lids
* Light switches
* Electrical plugs where equipment is connected/disconnected to the mains during the shift

This is not an exhaustive list – just think of the number of things you touch regularly when working with food – those are your hand contact points.

**Controlling hand contact points**

Proper control depends on thorough cleaning, at the right time, using the right method.

Hand contact points must be cleaned and disinfected frequently. Your Cleaning Schedule should detail the frequency but it’s strongly recommended that this is daily, ideally beforefood production begins. This will greatly reduce the number of bacteria which could contaminate food.

It’s important to use the correct cleaning chemicals. The areas must be cleaned using a detergent to remove any dirt and grime. A disinfectant must then be used to remove bacteria. The disinfectant should comply with BS EN 1276 or BS EN 13697 and be used in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions in terms of dilution and contact time. Spray disinfectants or disinfectant wipes are the most convenient methods.

Food handlers must wash their hands frequently whenever they might have become contaminated. This is one of the main ways to stop bacteria spreading in food handling areas.

If you would like further advice please contact the Food & Safety team on fs@falkirk.gov.uk