

A photograph of a hospital room. In the center is a white gurney with a light-colored table attached to the front. The gurney is covered with white linens and has a blue blanket. In the background, there is a medical station with various equipment, including a monitor, a yellow biohazard container, and a wall-mounted device. A window is visible on the left side of the room.

# How safe is your food?

Mason Jones was just five years old when he died from food poisoning.....

**HIS DEATH WAS COMPLETELY PREVENTABLE**

Mason Jones was one of the victims of the Wales E coli outbreak in 2005. He died because raw and cooked meats had not been handled separately.

Cross-contamination and poor temperature control of foodstuffs are the commonest causes of food poisoning outbreaks. Yet the control measures required are very straightforward:

- Raw foods should always be stored separately from foods which are ready to eat. If they are in the same 'fridge, raw foods should be stored at the bottom where they cannot drip onto other foods.
- Ideally, raw foods and ready to eat foods should be handled in different areas. Where this is not possible cleaning and disinfection of work surfaces must be carried out after handling raw foods and before handling ready to eat foods.
- Wherever possible, separate equipment and utensils should be used for raw and ready to eat foods. Where this is not practical then careful cleaning and disinfection between tasks is vital, as E coli O157 can survive on some surfaces for over 60 days.
- Food handlers must wash their hands thoroughly between handling raw foods and ready to eat foods.
- Keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot. Foods which can support the growth of bacteria should never be left at room temperature for longer than necessary.



**Safer food, better business**

For more advice on how to handle foods safely, view the Safer Food Better Business training DVD on-line at <http://www.sfbtraining.co.uk/>. The videos can be viewed in sixteen languages.

Over the coming months, food inspections of Suffolk businesses will be focussing on these issues. For more information contact your local Food and Safety Team

