While the American food supply is among the safest in the world, the Federal government **(FDA)** estimates that there are about **48 million cases of foodborne illness annually**—the equivalent of sickening 1 in 6 Americans each year. Each year these illnesses result in an estimated 128,000 hospitalizations and 3,000 deaths.

     When I was a child, I loved going out to eat at a restaurant and delighted in selecting food from the adult menu on my own. What I didn’t realize at the time, was how many safety preparations went into ensuring that I received a great food experience. I also have since learned that you truly are what you put into your body.  [Diet](http://www.weebly.com/weebly/main.php) and physical fitness are not enough to achieve total wellness; you must avoid impulse eating triggers and have well planned daily goals such as exercise for at least 30 minutes a day and [carefully](http://www.weebly.com/weebly/main.php) watching food portions.  These factors are often discussed but the fact that one must also be aware of the temperature and freshness of the food they eat and the cleanliness of their eating surroundings is not often emphasized as part of the wellness equation.  Although I do not work in the food industry, I have seen the negative impacts from this ignorance first hand.  In my current position as a UPS supervisor, I often observe my employees not washing their hands before eating lunch and subsequently getting sick when they least expect it. The frequent amount of coaching and counseling that I have provided to them over the years has made me keenly aware that a huge knowledge gap exists on how to reduce one’s vulnerability to [illness](http://www.weebly.com/weebly/main.php) from unclean [eating habits](http://www.weebly.com/weebly/main.php).  
  
With so much to be mindful of, it is no wonder that many people fail to make consistent healthy choices when it comes to what and how they consume food.  This website is designed to [improve](http://www.weebly.com/weebly/main.php) this success rate by providing easy-to-follow guidance that will result in a healthier lifestyle, improve awareness of food hygiene, and provide knowledge on how to make good food choices (NRAEF, 2012). A particular focus of this website is how to stay healthy by preventing food contamination and illness from food-borne bacteria and harmful micro-organisms (BUG, 2014).  
**Here are a few facts on the science behind clean eating…**  
          Micro-organisms are sub-microscopic which means they cannot be seen by the naked eye and therefore require a microscope to detect them.  Types of microorganisms include: [viruses](http://www.weebly.com/weebly/main.php), bacteria, fungi, protozoa and helminthes (i.e., [parasitic](http://www.weebly.com/weebly/main.php) worms). These micro-organisms are categorized into two main living groups; those with a visible nucleus or prokaryotes, and those without a visible nucleus called eukaryotes (NRAEF, 2012).).  Many of these microorganisms thrive as [parasites](http://www.weebly.com/weebly/main.php) to other living organisms. There are so many infectious diseases resulting from these microbes that live in our environment as well as from those found on and in the human body.  Since we cannot see these threats, we rely on the scientific study of microbes to comprehend how they function and to learn how they cause diseases and infections.  From this research, we can take precautions and have enacted laws to protect ourselves. It is a requirement for businesses to prepare food safely and healthy for public consumption in order to prevent illness from food-borne bacteria / contamination.  Failing to do so could lead to losing customers, financial difficulties, Finds, death, or being shut down by the health authorities (NRAEF, 2012). Food safety is a huge part of quality control and less food is wasted due to spoilage or contamination when staff are properly trained, monitored and held to high standards when preparing and storing food.  Many laws are on the [books](http://www.weebly.com/weebly/main.php) to ensure these standards are met. However, although we as individuals are not regulated by government laws, we are no less responsible for our [eating habits](http://www.weebly.com/weebly/main.php) and must be self-regulating and informed if we are to protect ourselves and our family members from consuming harmful micro-organisms. As you follow this website, you will see how together, we will use science and practical application to improve our cleanliness habits when it comes to selecting and preparing our own meals and perhaps lead longer and healthier lives (NRAEF, 2012).  
  
BUG.(2014), Types of Microorganisms/ Microorganism Retrieved on March 31, 2014, from: http://bugs.microorganisms.com /Types of\_ microorganisms.htm

National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation. (2012). Servesafe Coursebook 6th Edition. Chicago, IL: National Restaurant Association. Retrieved on May 2, 2014 issued by: Kaplan University - Food Safety and Microbiology (course: NS205).