

One of the more commonly known food poisoning organisms is E. coli (STEC). It is known under a number of different serotypes such as 'O157' and more recently 'O145'. The organism produces a Shiga toxin, hence the prefix **STEC** (**Shiga Toxin E Coli**). As with most pathogenic E. coli strains, they are capable of causing serious illnesses in humans. Typically, there are around 1,500 cases of STEC each year in the UK.

## Where is E. coli found?

E. coli (non STEC) is a common organism and can be found in vast numbers in animal and human gut contents, where it usually doesn't cause a problem as it is part of the natural gut flora.

However, strains of E. coli (STEC) can be found in a variety of foods including dairy products, various cooked meats, fruits, vegetables and salads, which is where the problems start. Finding E. coli (STEC) in foodstuff and in the environment is usually due to unsatisfactory storage, poor hygiene, and contaminated water sources.

## How can E. coli (STEC) be controlled?

Cross contamination can be controlled through simple hygiene measures. Washing your hands with soap and warm water and using disinfectants to clean surfaces will help stop infections from spreading.

Thorough disinfection and cleaning procedures must be followed using the correct product, at the correct dilution, for the right contact time. Evans Vanodine has a selection of products which are effective against E. coli:

**Protect / Protect RTU • Final Touch / Final Touch RTU • EC9 Washroom** – perfumed disinfectant cleaners, suitable in care establishments.

**Est-eem / Est-eem RTU • EC4 Sanitiser** – unperfumed disinfectant cleaners, suitable in food preparation areas.

**Chlor Tabs / Veggisan** – chlorine tablets which can be used for soaking cloths and mops, and for the disinfection of salads and vegetables.

Evans Vanodine has a selection of hand washes available, suitable for a variety of areas, both perfumed and unperfumed. Hands should be washed for at least 20 seconds and dried thoroughly.

**Evans Vanodine Technical Team**  
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