



Chapter 14

Push up Your Hygiene Quotient

You know how important is safe food to keep you disease free. Food hygiene is an important part of our lives since ancient times. Today, we understand the importance of living hygienically even more to stay disease free, especially in today's **low immunity** times.

This is why you keep your kitchen at home spanking clean, spray the dust bins with a disinfectant when you change the lining, wash your hands every time before handling food, keep the meat and vegetable cutting boards separate, and wash your fruits and vegetables well before you eat or cook them.

But all these rules go out of the window when you travel, or go out to eat at a restaurant, or stop at a roadside eatery for a spicy evening snack... because then things (hygiene) are not in your control.

This is where FSSAI and Eat Right India steps in. Their Hygiene Rating Scheme is an effective proactive step to ensure that you get hygienic food even when you eat out

The Good Work!

Hygiene Rating Scheme is a certification system for the food service and retail establishments that provide food directly to the consumers. The food businesses are rated from 1 up to 5 smileys as per the level of compliance (see pic) based on food hygiene and safety conditions observed at the time of audit, and is valid for one year. The food establishments covered under this scheme include food service establishments (hotels, restaurants, cafeteria, dhabas, etc.), bakeries, meat retail shops and sweet shops (mithai shop). So next time you go out to eat, look out for the hygiene rating certificate that is supposed to be displayed prominently in the food service area by the certified establishments. Food Hygiene Rating Scheme is implemented online through Hygiene Rating Portal (www.fssai.gov.in/hygieneRating), and the process is very simple.

The purpose of the scheme is to:

- 1** Encourage food businesses to ensure high hygiene standards and continue maintaining them, and to showcase the same to their consumers.
- 2** Motivate other food businesses having lower hygiene standards to improve.
- 3** Allow consumers to make an informed food choice about where to eat and cultivate responsible eating habits.

Let's recapitulate the Do's and Don't when you eat out (as discussed in the Safe Travel chapter)

- 1 First rule is to eat food from a FSSAI licensed or registered food business.
- 2 Avoid eating food or drinking water from a source that may be contaminated as it may lead to Traveller's diarrhoea (TD).
- 3 Avoid cut fruits, salads, raw vegetables from an unhygienic place or those which are being sold in open. When you eat raw fruit or vegetables that can be peeled, peel them yourself after washing your hands with soap first.
- 4 Always prefer foods that have been thoroughly cooked and are still hot and steaming at the time of eating.
- 5 Do not consume un-pasteurised milk and milk products (like curd especially raita, and paneer).
- 6 Avoid eating non-vegetarian food outside, unless you are sure of the source; as these get very easily contaminated, particularly in warm weather.
- 7 Beverages especially cold beverages prepared from clean source of water should be consumed.
- 8 Ensure that the bottled water and beverages you pick are of a dependable brand (Look for FSSAI license number on the label). It is better to avoid ice as it may be made from unsafe water.
- 9 Stay prepared. Always carry your own water, snacks, medicines etc to fall back on if need be.





Hygiene Rating Chart

The score of the checklist is converted in per cent and numerical score (between 1-5). The table below provides detail of percent score wise rating:

Hygiene No.	Hygiene Rating	Category	%Score
5	😊😊😊😊😊	Excellent	81 to 100
4	😊😊😊😊😐	Very Good	61 to 80
3	😊😊😊😐😐	Good	41 to 60
2	😊😊😐😐😐	Needs Improvement	21 to 40
1	😊😐😐😐😐	Urgent Improvement	20 or below

Hygiene Rating Certificate

