



chapter 3

The Safe Food Handler

How Food Handlers Can Contaminate Food

Food handlers can contaminate food when they:

- Have a foodborne illness
- Have wounds that contain a pathogen
- Sneeze or cough
- Have contact with a person who is sick
- Touch anything that may contaminate their hands and do not wash them
- Have symptoms such as diarrhea, vomiting, or jaundice—a yellowing of the eyes or skin



Managing a Personal Hygiene Program

Managers must focus on the following:

- Creating personal hygiene policies
- Training food handlers on personal hygiene policies and retraining them regularly
- Modeling correct behavior at all times
- Supervising food safety practices
- Revising personal hygiene policies when laws or science change



Infected Wounds or Cuts

Infected wounds or cuts:

- Contain pus
- Must be covered to prevent pathogens from contaminating food and food-contact surfaces

How a wound is covered depends on where it is located:

- Cover wounds on the hand or wrist with an impermeable cover, (i.e. bandage or finger cot) and then a single-use glove
- Cover wounds on the arm with an impermeable cover, such as a bandage
- Cover wounds on other parts of the body with a dry, tight-fitting bandage



Single-Use Gloves

Single-use gloves:

- Should be used when handling ready-to-eat food
 - Except when washing produce
 - Except when handling ready-to-eat ingredients for dishes cooked to the correct temperature
- Must **NEVER** be used in place of handwashing
- Must **NEVER** be washed and reused
- Must fit correctly



Single-Use Gloves

How to use gloves:

- Wash hands before putting gloves on when starting a new task
- Select the correct glove size
- Hold gloves by the edge when putting them on
- Once gloves are on, check for rips or tears
- **NEVER** blow into gloves
- **NEVER** roll gloves to make them easier to put on



Bare-Hand Contact with Ready-to-Eat Food

Bare-hand contact with ready-to-eat food must be avoided unless:

- The food is an ingredient in a dish that does not contain raw meat, seafood, or poultry
 - The dish will be cooked to at least 145°F (63°C)
- The food is an ingredient in a dish containing raw meat, seafood, or poultry
 - The dish will be cooked to the required minimum internal temperature of the raw item(s)
- **NEVER** handle ready-to-eat food with bare hands when you primarily serve a high-risk population



Handling Staff Illnesses

If:

The food handler has a sore throat with a fever

Then:

- **Restrict** the food handler from working with or around food
- **Exclude** the food handler from the operation if you primarily serve a high-risk population
- A written release from a medical practitioner is required before returning to work



Handling Staff Illnesses

If:

The food handler has at least one of these symptoms

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea



Then:

- **Exclude** the food handler from the operation
- Before returning to work, food handlers who vomited or had diarrhea must meet one of these requirements
 - Have had no symptoms for at least 24 hours
 - Have a written release from a medical practitioner

Handling Staff Illnesses

If:

The food handler has jaundice

Then:

- Report the food handler to the regulatory authority
- **Exclude** food handlers from the operation if they have had jaundice for 7 days or less
- Food handlers must have a written release from a medical practitioner and approval from the regulatory authority before returning to work

Handling Staff Illnesses

If:

The food handler is vomiting or has diarrhea and has been diagnosed with an illness caused by one of these pathogens

- Norovirus
- *Shigella* spp.
- Nontyphoidal *Salmonella*
- Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli*

Then:

- **Exclude** the food handler from the operation
- Work with the food handler's medical practitioner and/or the local regulatory authority to decide when the person can go back to work

Handling Staff Illnesses

If:

The food handler has been diagnosed with an illness caused by one of these pathogens.

- Hepatitis A
- *Salmonella* Typhi

Then:

- **Exclude** the food handler from the operation
- Work with the food handler's medical practitioner and/or the local regulatory authority to decide when the person can go back to work