



3

The Safe Food Handler



The Safe Food Handler

Objectives:

By the end of this chapter, you should be able to identify the following:

- How to avoid behaviors that can contaminate food
- How to wash and care for hands
- The correct way to dress for work and handle work clothes
- Where staff can eat, drink, smoke, and chew gum or tobacco to minimize contamination
- How to prevent staff who may be carrying pathogens from working with or around food or from working in the operation



How Food Handlers Can Contaminate Food

Situations that can lead to contaminating food:

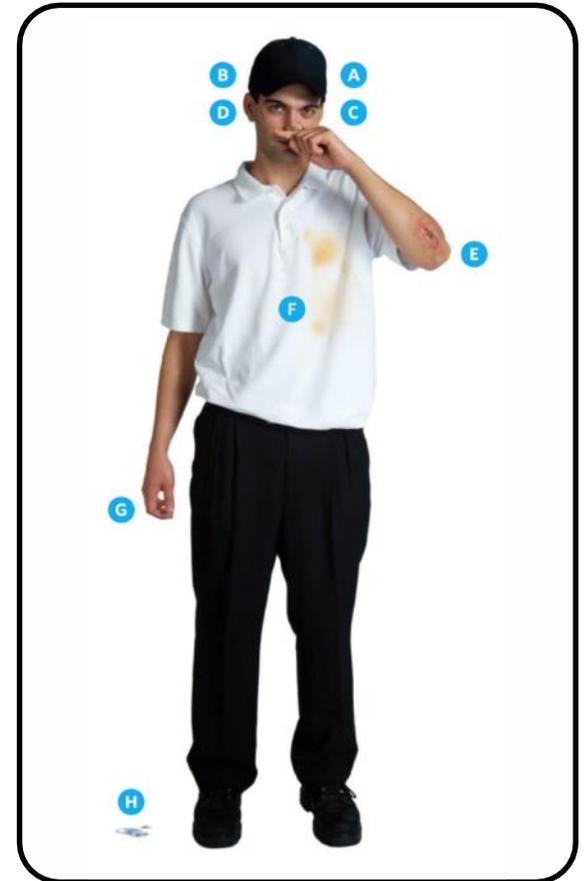
- Have a foodborne illness
- Have wounds or boils that contain a pathogen
- Sneeze or cough
- Have contact with a person who is sick
- Use the restroom and do not wash their hands
- Have symptoms such as diarrhea, vomiting, or jaundice—a yellowing of the eyes or skin



How Food Handlers Can Contaminate Food

Actions that can contaminate food:

- A. Scratching the scalp
- B. Running fingers through hair
- C. Wiping or touching the nose
- D. Rubbing an ear
- E. Touching a pimple or infected wound/boil
- F. Wearing and touching a dirty uniform
- G. Coughing or sneezing into the hand
- H. Spitting in the operation



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





Handwashing

Where to wash hands:

- Wash hands in a sink designated for handwashing.
- **NEVER** wash hands in sinks designated for food prep or dishwashing or sinks used for discarding waste water.





Handwashing

How to wash hands (should take at least 20 seconds):



1. **Wet hands and arms.** Use running warm water.



2. **Apply soap.** Apply enough to build up a good lather. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations.



3. **Scrub hands and arms vigorously for 10 to 15 seconds.** Clean fingertips, under fingernails, and between fingers.



4. **Rinse hands and arms thoroughly.** Use running warm water.



5. **Dry hands and arms.** Use a single-use paper towel or hand dryer.



Handwashing

Avoid contaminating clean hands:

- Consider using a paper towel to turn off the faucet and to open the door.



Handwashing

When to Wash Hands

Food handlers must wash their hands *before*:

- Preparing food
- Working with clean equipment and utensils
- Putting on single-use gloves

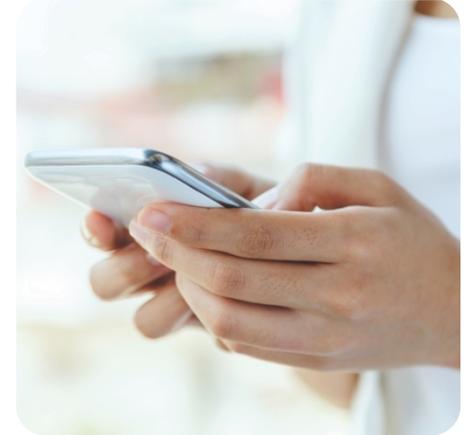


Handwashing

When to Wash Hands

Food handlers must wash their hands *after*:

- Using the restroom
- Touching the body or clothing
- Coughing, sneezing, blowing their nose, or using a handkerchief or tissue
- Eating, drinking, smoking, or chewing gum or tobacco
- Handling soiled items
- Handling raw meat, seafood, or poultry
- Taking out garbage



Handwashing

When to Wash Hands

Food handlers must wash their hands *after*:

- Handling service or aquatic animals
- Handling chemicals that might affect food safety
- Changing tasks (before beginning new task).
- Leaving and returning to the kitchen/prep area.
- Handling money.
- Using electronic devices
- Touching anything that may contaminate hands





Handwashing

Corrective Action

If food handlers have touched food or food-contact surfaces with unclean hands:

- Dispose of the contaminated food.
- Clean potentially contaminated equipment and utensils.
- Retrain or coach food handlers who are not following proper handwashing procedures if necessary.



Handwashing

Hand antiseptics:

- Liquids or gels used to lower the number of pathogens on skin

If used, hand antiseptics:

- Must comply with the CFR and FDA standards
- Should be used only *after* handwashing
- Must **NEVER** be used in place of handwashing
- Should be allowed to dry before touching food or equipment



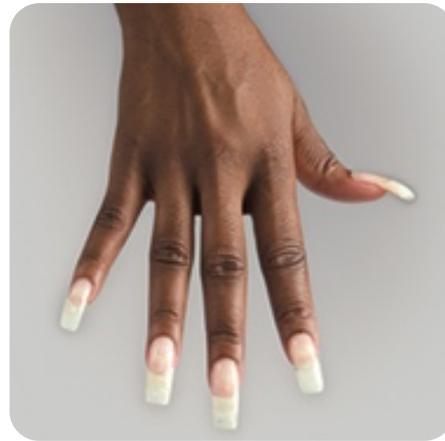


Hand Care

Requirements for food handlers:



Keep fingernails short and clean.



Do **NOT** wear false nails.



Do **NOT** wear nail polish.

Infected Wounds or Cuts

Infected wounds, cuts, or boils:

- Contain pus
- Must be covered if they are open or draining

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

- Hand, finger, or wrist—Cover wounds with an impermeable cover (e.g., bandage or finger cot) and then a single-use glove.
- Arm—Cover wounds with an impermeable cover, such as a bandage.
- Other part of the body—Cover wounds with a dry, tight-fitting bandage.



Single-Use Gloves

Single-use gloves:

- Must **NEVER** be used in place of handwashing
- Should be used when handling ready-to-eat food
 - Except when washing produce
 - Except when handling ready-to-eat ingredients for a dish that will be cooked to the correct internal temperature





Single-Use Gloves

Which gloves to buy:

- Approved gloves
- Disposable gloves
- Multiple sizes
- Latex alternatives



Single-Use Gloves

How to use gloves:

- Wash hands before putting on gloves 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.
- **NEVER** wash and reuse gloves.



Single-Use Gloves

When to change gloves:

- As soon as they become dirty or torn.
- Before beginning a different task.
- After an interruption, such as taking a phone call.
- After handling raw meat, seafood, or poultry and before handling ready-to-eat food.
- After four hours of continuous use.





Bare-Hand Contact with Ready-to-Eat Food

NEVER handle ready-to-eat food with bare hands when you primarily serve a high-risk population.

Avoid bare-hand contact with ready-to-eat food *unless*:

- The food is an ingredient in a dish that does *not* contain raw meat, seafood, or poultry *and*
 - 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 *and*
 - The dish will be cooked to the required minimum internal temperature of the raw item(s).





Personal Hygiene Practices

Food handlers must:

- Follow a personal hygiene program.
- Shower or bathe before work.



Work Attire

Food handlers must use hair restraints:

- Wear a clean hat or other hair restraint when in a food-prep area.
- Do **NOT** wear hair accessories that could become physical contaminants.
- Do **NOT** wear false eyelashes.
- Wear a beard restraint to cover facial hair.





Work Attire

Food handlers must wear clean clothing:

- Wear clean clothing daily.
- Change uniforms, including aprons, when they are soiled.
- Change into work clothes at work.
- Store street clothing and personal belongings in designated areas.
- Keep dirty clothing away from food and prep areas.



Work Attire

Food handlers must handle aprons correctly:

- Remove aprons when leaving prep areas.
- **NEVER** wipe your hands on your apron.





Work Attire

Food handlers must not wear jewelry:

- Remove jewelry from hands and arms before prepping food or when working around prep areas:
 - Rings, except for a plain band
 - Bracelets, including medical bracelets
 - Watches
- Remove other jewelry, as required by your company.





Eating, Drinking, Smoking, and Chewing Gum or Tobacco

Food handlers may only eat, drink, smoke, or chew gum or tobacco in designated areas.

Food handlers must **NEVER** eat, drink, smoke, or chew gum or tobacco when:

- Prepping or serving food
- Working in prep areas
- Working in areas used to clean utensils and equipment

Exception: Employees can drink from a correctly covered container if they are careful to prevent contamination of their hands, the container, and exposed food, utensils, and equipment.





Policies for Reporting Health Issues

- Tell staff to let you know when they are sick.
- Be prepared to show proof that you have done this, such as:
 - Signed statements in which staff have agreed to report illness
 - Documentation showing staff have completed training, which includes information on the importance of reporting illness
 - Posted signs or pocket cards that remind staff to notify managers when they are sick

Reporting Illness

Staff must report illnesses:

- Before they come to work.
- If they get sick while working
- If they—or someone they live with—has been diagnosed with an illness from one of these pathogens:
 - Norovirus
 - Hepatitis A
 - *Shigella* spp.
 - Shiga-toxin producing *E. coli* (STEC)
 - *Salmonella* Typhi
 - Nontyphoidal *Salmonella*



Reporting Illness

When food handlers are sick, you may need to:

- Restrict them from working with exposed food, utensils, and equipment.
- Exclude them from coming into the operation. This is especially important if they have these symptoms:
 - Vomiting
 - Diarrhea
 - Jaundice (a yellowing of the skin or eyes)
 - Sore throat with fever
 - Infected wound or boil that is open or draining (unless properly covered)





Watching for Staff Illnesses

Watch for these signs of illness:

- Vomiting
- Excessive trips to the bathroom
- Yellowing of the skin, eyes, and fingernails
- Cold sweats or chills (indicating a fever)
- Persistent nasal discharge and sneezing





Restricting or Excluding Staff for Medical Conditions

If	Then
The food handler has an infected wound or boil that is not properly covered.	Restrict the food handler from working with exposed food, utensils, and equipment.
The food handler has a sore throat with a fever.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Restrict the food handler from working with exposed food, utensils, and equipment.● 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.

Restricting or Excluding Staff for Medical Conditions

If	Then
<p>The food handler</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="137 444 639 636">● Has persistent sneezing, coughing, or a runny nose<li data-bbox="137 672 668 865">● With discharges from the eyes, nose, or mouth	<p>Restrict the food handler from working with exposed food, utensils, and equipment.</p>

Restricting or Excluding Staff for Medical Conditions

If	Then
<p>The food handler has at least one of these symptoms from an infectious condition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Vomiting● Diarrhea● Jaundice (yellow skin or eyes)	<p>Exclude the food handler from the operation.</p> <p>Vomiting and diarrhea</p> <p>Before returning to work, food handlers must have either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Had no symptoms for at least 24 hours. <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● A written release from a medical practitioner. <p>Jaundice</p> <p>Report food handlers to the regulatory authority. Exclude food handlers who have had jaundice for seven days or less.</p> <p>Before returning to work, food handlers must have both:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● A written release from a medical practitioner <p>And</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Approval from the regulatory authority



Restricting or Excluding Staff for Medical Conditions

If	Then
<p>The food handler is vomiting or has diarrhea and has been diagnosed with an illness caused by one of these pathogens:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Norovirus● <i>Shigella</i> spp.● Nontyphoidal <i>Salmonella</i>● Shiga toxin-producing <i>E. coli</i> (STEC) <p>The food handler has been diagnosed with an illness caused by one of these pathogens:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Hepatitis A● <i>Salmonella</i> Typhi	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Exclude the food handler from the operation.● Report the situation to the regulatory authority.● Work with the medical practitioner and the local regulatory authority.