



Personal Hygiene For Food Handlers

An important way to prevent food contamination is by food handlers maintaining a high standard of personal hygiene and cleanliness. Did you know that even healthy people carry food poisoning bacteria on their bodies?

It is important that food handlers;

- Thoroughly wash and dry hands before handling food and wash and dry them again frequently during work.
- Do what ever is reasonable to prevent their body, anything from their body or anything they are wearing coming into contact with food or food contact surfaces
- Prevent unnecessary contact with ready to eat foods such as salads or cooked meats.
- Wear clean clothing. Uniforms, smocks or aprons should be worn and laundered daily.
- Ensure that all dressings or bandages are covered with a waterproof covering.
- Do not eat over unprotected food surfaces that are likely to come into contact with food.
- Do not sneeze, blow, cough, smoke, spit, urinate or defecate within a food handling area.
- Tie back or cover hair.
- Keep fingernails short, clean and without nail polish.



Hand Washing

Unwashed or poorly washed hands are the most

common way to transfer bacteria to food. Food handlers are expected to wash their hands whenever their hands are likely to contaminate food. This includes

- Before commencing or resuming work
- Immediately after smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or tissue, eating, drinking or using tobacco
- After touching their hair, scalp or a body opening
- Immediately before working with ready to eat food
- After using the toilet
- After handling rubbish and or after any cleaning task

See Hand Washing fact sheet for further information.

Gloves

It is important for food handlers to remember that gloves are only a physical barrier between hands and food. Individuals must always thoroughly wash and dry hands before putting on gloves. Gloves must never be re-used or washed. Gloves must be changed:

- At least every hour
- If they become contaminated
- If they tear
- When switching between raw and ready to eat foods
- After any cleaning task
- After touching your hair, scalp or body opening

Food Handlers Health

Food handlers must be required to inform their supervisor when they are ill. Food handlers should be excluded from handling food if they are ill with:

- Vomiting,
- Diarrhoea,
- Fever or jaundice
- Food borne disease
- Sore throat with fever
- Infected skin lesions or
- Have discharge from the ears, nose or throat.