

PERSONAL HYGIENE FOR FOOD HANDLERS

'High standards of personal hygiene are essential for food handlers as bacteria and microbes live on all parts of the human body'.

A high standard of personal hygiene is an important aspect in the production of safe and suitable food.

- Do not wear jewellery on hands and wrists.
- Tie back or cover hair.
- Keep fingernails short, clean and without nail polish.
- Uniforms, smocks or aprons should be worn and laundered daily.
- Cover cuts and sores with a waterproof, brightly coloured plaster.
- Do not prepare food when you are ill.

Whilst handling food, avoid the following:

- Touching parts of your body (face, nose ears and mouth).
- Wiping off sweat.
- Coughing or sneezing.
- Tasting food with your fingers, or utensils that are put back into the food.

Hand Washing is Vital

Unwashed or poorly washed hands are the most common way to transfer bacteria to food. Hands must always be washed when they are a likely source of contamination. Particularly:

- Before commencing or resuming work.
- After using the toilet.
- After smoking.
- After handling rubbish.
- After blowing your nose.
- After handling raw food.
- Before handling cooked / ready-to-eat food.
- After any cleaning task.
- After touching your hair, scalp or body opening.



Hand Washing Procedure

Rinse hands under warm water.

1. Apply liquid soap and massage into hands for 20-30 seconds, preferably also using a nail brush to scrub under fingernails.
2. Rinse hands well under warm water.
3. Dry hands thoroughly with disposable paper towels or air blower.

Do not use cloth towels.

When a Food Handler is Sick

Food handlers must tell their supervisor if they have any of the following symptoms whilst at work:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Fever
- Sore throat with a fever

Food handlers must also tell their supervisor if they have:

- Been diagnosed as having or carrying a food borne illness.
- Infections, skin injuries or sores.
- Been otherwise unwell.
- Or suspect they have contaminated food (e.g. jewellery has fallen into food).

Gloves

It is important to remember that gloves are only a physical barrier between hands and food. Even if a food handler uses gloves and utensils, they must still wash their hands regularly.

Treat gloves as though they are your own hands.

Change gloves:

- Before commencing or resuming work.
- After using the toilet.
- After smoking.
- After handling rubbish.
- After blowing your nose.
- After handling raw food.
- Before handling cooked / ready-to-eat food.
- After any cleaning task.
- After touching your hair, scalp or body opening.

Gloves must not be:

- set aside
- reused
- washed