

*Ready-To-Eat-Foods

Ready-to-eat foods are foods that will not be heated or cooked to a temperature that is hot enough to kill pathogens prior to consumption:

- Foods that are already cooked
- Fresh produce – lettuce, apple slices, carrot sticks
- Sandwich toppings
- Breads, tortillas, etc
- Crackers, cookies, pretzels
- Garnishes

It is possible to prevent bare-hand contact with ready-to-eat food* in several ways:

- ***using utensils such as tongs***
- ***using other barriers such as wax or deli tissues between hands and the food***
- ***using gloves.***

On May 1, 2005 the Deseret News printed an article that cited the most commonly identified critical violations found in food establishments throughout Salt Lake County. In January 2006, The Bureau of Food Protection completed a second analysis. The most commonly cited violations are listed below:

1. Food Contact Surfaces Clean to Sight and Touch
2. Hot and Cold Holding
3. Separation, Packaging, Segregation of Raw Animal Foods
4. Storage, Separation of Toxics/Chemicals
5. Eating, Drinking or Using Tobacco
6. Contamination by Employee Hands
7. When to Wash Hands
8. Chemical Sanitization

Brochures have been developed for each of these eight commonly cited critical violations. An additional brochure discusses "Cooling Potentially Hazardous Foods".

These brochures are part of a goal to reduce critical violations in food establishments and have been developed to aid you in correcting critical violations in your establishment.

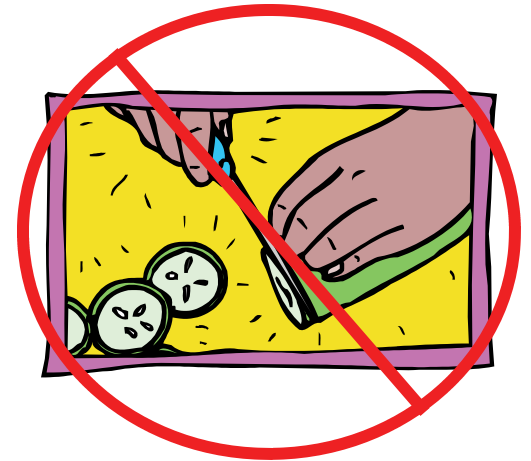
For further information or questions concerning food safety:


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Preventing Contamination of Food by Employee Hands





Three interventions can help prevent the transmission of pathogens to ready-to-eat food:

- 1) Proper hand washing
- 2) Preventing bare-hand contact with ready-to-eat food
- 3) Excluding ill food workers from food preparation.

In the past, bacterial pathogens were the leading cause of food-borne illness, but now viruses cause the majority of illnesses associated with food. Hand washing does not effectively remove viruses from the hands, and preventing the transfer of viruses from hands to food is very difficult. Preventing contact between bare hands and ready-to-eat food* is an important step in reducing the number of people who get foodborne illnesses each year. It is possible to prevent bare-hand contact with ready-to-eat food* in several ways: using utensils, or other barriers such as tissues between hands and the food, and using gloves.

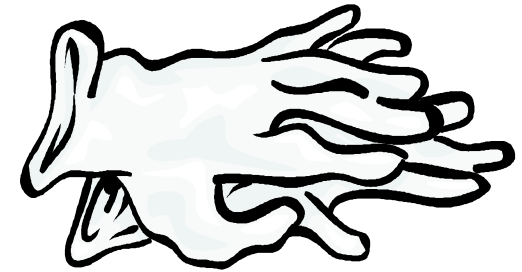


The Limitations of Hand washing

Proper hand washing requires lathering the hands in soap and running water for at least 20 seconds. Many times food service workers do not take the time to properly wash their hands after each time they become contaminated. When hands are heavily contaminated, even proper hand washing may not prevent the transmission of pathogens to food.

Hand sanitizers are not a viable alternative to hand washing for food service workers. Hand antiseptics are not approved for contact with food or food contact surfaces, nor are they effective in preventing the transmission of the Hepatitis A virus and Norovirus.

Hand washing with plain soap and hot water, and the use of a physical barrier such as gloves can prevent the transmission of pathogens from food service workers to consumers.



Proper Hand Washing Procedure:

- 1) Wet hands with running water as hot as you can comfortably stand (at least 100°F)
- 2) Apply soap
- 3) Vigorously scrub hands and arms for at least twenty seconds
- 4) Clean under fingernails and between fingers
- 5) Rinse thoroughly under running water
- 6) Dry hands and arms with a single-use paper towel or warm-air hand dryer