

HANDLING READY-TO-EAT FOOD SAFELY

The MN Food Code prohibits food employees from handling ready-to-eat food with their bare hands. There are several ways to prepare ready to eat food and avoid contact with bare hands.

Why is it necessary to have a barrier between bare hands and ready-to-eat food?

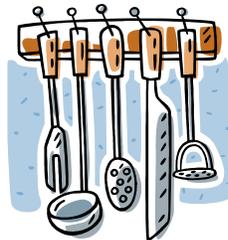
Norovirus is the leading cause of foodborne illness in Minnesota. Depending upon the level of contamination of hands, handwashing alone may not be adequate in preventing the transmission of viral and protozoan microbes from infected food workers to ready to eat foods.

What kinds of food are ready-to-eat?

- Prepared fresh fruits and vegetables served raw
- Salads and salad ingredients
- Cold meats and sandwiches
- Bread, toast, rolls and baked goods
- Fruit or vegetables for mixed drinks
- Ice served to the customer
- Garnishes such as lettuce, parsley, lemon wedges, potato chips or pickles on plates
- Any food that will not be thoroughly cooked or reheated after it is prepared

What may I use to prevent bare hand contact with ready to eat food?

- Tongs
- Forks & spoons
- Deli paper
- Disposable gloves
- Waxed paper
- Napkins
- Spatulas



GOOD PRACTICES FOR DISPOSABLE GLOVE USE

1. Always wash your hands before putting on new gloves.
2. Gloves must be discarded:
 - After sneezing or coughing into your hands
 - After touching your hair or face
 - Between handling raw foods and ready-to-eat foods
 - When an activity or workstation change occurs
 - When they are contaminated or torn
3. Frequently change gloves and wash hands to minimize the build-up of perspiration. Sweaty hands may breed bacteria.
4. Food handlers with cuts, scrapes, or burns on their hands must cover the area with an impermeable bandage and always wear gloves.

