

4

The Safe Food Handler

Chapter Overview

Chapter 4 introduces students to safe food-handling practices related to personal hygiene.

Learning Objectives

- 4-1** Describe the requirements for personal hygiene and cleanliness
- 4-2** Describe how food handlers contaminate food and how to prevent contamination
- 4-3** Identify proper handwashing techniques and procedures and hand care requirements
- 4-4** Explain the importance of avoiding bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food
- 4-5** Identify criteria for excluding staff from the operation or restricting them from working with or around food

Opening Case Study

1. What could have been done to prevent the outbreak?

If the food handler had symptoms, the situation could have been prevented if they had immediately reported them to management and management had excluded the food handler from the operation. The outbreak might also have been avoided if the food handler practiced correct and frequent hand-washing while working, especially after using the restroom. Management must always remind staff of the importance of reporting illnesses and practicing proper hygiene.

Chapter Breakdown

Pages 76 to 77

4.1 Personal Hygiene and Contamination

Resources

PowerPoint Slides 3 to 4

Reinforce and Review:

- Food handlers pose a greater risk for contaminating food when they have a foodborne illness; wounds or boils that contain a pathogen; contact with someone who is ill; or symptoms such as sneezing, coughing, diarrhea, vomiting, or jaundice. The risk is also greater when food handlers use the restroom and do not wash their hands. Other common ways that food handlers can contaminate food include touching their scalp, hair, nose, or ears; touching a pimple or wound; wearing and touching a dirty uniform; coughing or sneezing into their hands; and spitting in the operation.

Key Terms

- **Carriers:** People who carry pathogens and infect others, yet never get sick themselves.

Knowledge Check Answers

1. Food handlers can contaminate food in any of the following situations:
 - When they have a foodborne illness
 - When they have wounds or boils that contain a pathogen
 - When sneezing or coughing
 - When they have contact with a person who is ill
 - When they use the restroom and do not wash their hands, through the fecal–oral route of contamination
 - When they have symptoms such as diarrhea, vomiting, or jaundice—a yellowing of the eyes or skin
2. Carriers are people who carry pathogens and can infect others without getting sick themselves.

Chapter Breakdown

Pages 78 to 91**4.2 A Good Personal Hygiene Program**

Resources

PowerPoint Slides 5 to 16

Reinforce and Review:

- Hands must be cared for and washed correctly. They must be washed at a sink designated for hand-washing. They also must be washed at the correct times. This includes before preparing food, working with clean equipment and utensils, putting on single-use gloves, and starting a new task. Food handlers must also wash their hands after using the restroom and after any other activities that can contaminate their hands. Hand antiseptics should never be used in place of handwashing.
- Single-use gloves must be worn when handling ready-to-eat food. Wash hands before putting on gloves. Wear gloves that are the correct size. Avoid touching the gloves when you put them on. Change your gloves when they are dirty or torn; before starting a new task; after an interruption in your task; after handling raw meat, seafood, or poultry and before handling ready-to-eat food; and after four hours of continuous use. Never handle ready-to-eat food with bare hands if you primarily serve a high-risk population.
- Food handlers should shower or bathe before going to work. Food handlers also must put on clean clothing and a hair restraint before handling food or working in prep areas. They must remove jewelry from hands and arms. Aprons should always be removed and stored when staff members leave prep areas. If they have a wound or boil, it must be covered correctly.
- Food handlers should never eat, smoke, or chew gum or tobacco in food-prep or service areas, or in areas designated for cleaning.
- Require staff to report health problems to management. Managers should also watch for staff illnesses. Managers must exclude or restrict food handlers who have certain symptoms or medical conditions. Check with your regulatory authority for requirements that apply to your operation.

Key Terms

- **Hand antiseptics:** Liquids or gels used to lower the number of pathogens on the skin's surface. Hand antiseptics should only be used after correct handwashing, not in place of it.
- **Impermeable:** A material that does not allow liquid to pass through it—for example, a bandage or finger cot.
- **Hair restraint:** Device used to keep a food handler's hair away from food and to keep the individual from touching their hair.

Knowledge Check Answers

1. To wash hands correctly:
 1. Wet hands and arms using warm running water.
 2. Apply enough soap to build up a good lather.
 3. Scrub hands and arms vigorously for 10 to 15 seconds.
 4. Rinse hands and arms thoroughly under warm, running water.
 5. Dry hands and arms using a single-use paper towel or a hand dryer.
2. When dealing with a prep cook who has a sore throat and fever:
 1. The manager must restrict the cook from working with exposed food, utensils, and equipment.
 2. The manager does not need to exclude the cook from the operation since it does not primarily serve a high-risk population.
 3. The food handler may return to work with or around food when they have a written release from a medical practitioner.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: Food Safety Anti-Vision Board

LO: 4-1 Describe the requirements for personal hygiene and cleanliness

Materials: Internet-enabled devices

1. Before class starts, create an online document or a virtual discussion board thread and share it with students.
2. Give students five minutes to find images online that depict unhygienic practices in the kitchen (ex: food handlers wearing jewelry or unrestrained facial hair).
3. Have students post images along with a one sentence explanation of the violation depicted.
4. Ask students to comment on a peer's post with a recommendation for correcting the violation.

Instructor Note: If you don't want students to use their devices, bring food-related magazines and scissors and glue or tape to class. Students can identify and cut out violations to post on the board or present to the class.

End of Chapter

Page 92

Discussion Questions

1. What are some basic work attire requirements for staff?

Staff must meet the following work attire requirements:

- Wear a clean hat or other hair restraint.
- Wear clean clothing daily.
- Remove aprons when leaving food-preparation areas.
- Remove jewelry from hands and arms before preparing food or when working around prep areas.

2. What personal behaviors can contaminate food?

The following personal behaviors can contaminate food:

- Wiping or touching the nose
- Rubbing an ear
- Scratching the scalp
- Touching a pimple or an infected wound
- Running fingers through the hair

3. What are some basic guidelines for hand care?

The following are some basic guidelines for hand care:

- Keep fingernails short, clean, and filed.
- Do not wear false fingernails.
- Do not wear nail polish.

4. What procedures must food handlers follow when using gloves?

Food handlers must follow these procedures when wearing gloves to handle food:

- Wash hands before putting on gloves when starting a new task.
- Choose the correct glove size.
- Hold gloves by the edge when putting them on. Avoid touching the glove as much as possible.
- Check gloves for rips and tears after they have been put on.
- Never blow into gloves.
- Never roll gloves to make them easier to put on.
- Never wash and reuse gloves.

5. What staff health problems pose a possible threat to food safety? What are the appropriate actions that should be taken?

These staff health problems pose a possible threat to food safety:

- Infected wound or boil that is not properly covered. Restrict the food handler from working with exposed food, utensils, and equipment.
- Sore throat with fever. 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.
- Persistent sneezing, coughing, or a runny nose that causes discharge from the eyes, nose, or mouth. Restrict the food handler from working with exposed food, utensils, and equipment.
- Vomiting, diarrhea, or jaundice from an infectious condition. Exclude the food handler from the operation. Food handlers who vomit or have diarrhea cannot return to work unless they have had no symptoms for at least 24 hours or have a written release from a medical practitioner. Food handlers with jaundice must be reported to the regulatory authority. Food handlers who have had jaundice for seven days or less must be excluded from the operation. They cannot return to work unless they have a written release from a medical practitioner and approval from the regulatory authority.
- A foodborne illness caused by one of these pathogens and symptoms of diarrhea or vomiting: Norovirus; *Shigella* spp.; nontyphoidal *Salmonella*; or Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli*. Exclude the food handler from the operation. Report the situation to the regulatory authority. Work with the medical practitioner and the local regulatory authority to determine when the employee can safely return to the operation and/or carry out regular food-handling duties.
- A foodborne illness caused by one of these pathogens: Hepatitis A or *Salmonella* Typhi. Exclude the food handler from the operation. Report the situation to the regulatory authority. Some food handlers diagnosed with an illness may not experience symptoms, or their symptoms may have ended. Work with the medical practitioner and the local regulatory authority to determine whether the food handlers must be excluded from the operation or restricted from working with exposed food, utensils, and equipment. The medical practitioner and regulatory authority will also determine when the employees can safely return to the operation and/or carry out their regular food-handling duties.

6. When handling produce, when must single-use gloves be worn?

Single-use gloves should always be worn whenever handling produce that is ready-to-eat without any further washing or cooking. Single-use gloves are not required when washing produce. They also do not need to be worn when handling ready to eat ingredients that will be cooked to the correct internal temperature. An example of this would be adding onions to a beef roast which will then be fully cooked.

Page 93**Apply Your Knowledge****Robert's Day****1. What did Robert and his manager do wrong?**

Robert and his manager made the following errors:

- Robert did not report his illness to the manager before coming to work.
- Robert did not take a bath or shower before work.
- Robert wore a dirty uniform to work.
- Robert should have removed his watch and rings (with the exception of a plain band) before prepping and serving food.
- Robert did not wear a hair restraint.
- Robert did not wash his hands before handling the raw chicken.
- Robert did not wash his hands after handling the raw chicken.
- The manager did not ask about Robert's symptoms. If Robert were to report that he had diarrhea, the manager should have sent him home.
- Robert did not wash his hands correctly after taking out the garbage.
- Robert did not wash his hands correctly after using the restroom.
- Robert did not dry his hands correctly after washing them. He got them dirty again when he wiped them on his apron.
- Robert wore his apron into the restroom.
- The manager did not make sure the restroom was stocked with paper towels.
- Robert touched the ready-to-eat chicken with his contaminated hands.
- Robert was eating chicken while prepping food.

Pages 94 to 95**Study Questions**

1. C. Wash her hands
2. D. Take off their aprons
3. C. Put on a bandage
4. A. After washing hands
5. B. A food handler whose young son has vomiting
6. B. The cook did not wash hands and put on new gloves before slicing the hamburger buns.
7. A. 10 seconds
8. C. Sore throat with fever
9. D. When adding seasonings to raw meat
10. D. Tell the cook to not come to work and to see a doctor.