

Illness

You must not work when you are suffering from diseases which are likely to be transmitted through food. These include gastroenteritis (often called 'gastro'), hepatitis A and hepatitis E.

You should not return to work if you are suffering from vomiting and/or diarrhoea. Don't return to work until your symptoms have stopped for 48 hours. If you are unsure, you should contact your doctor for advice.

Good Hygiene is Good Business

Good personal hygiene is not only essential to prevent the contamination of food; it also makes good business sense. Customers like to see food handling staff who take hygiene seriously and practice safe food handling.

Food laws require that people who handle food must have the appropriate skills and knowledge for the work they do.

Put yourself in their place and watch how your workmates handle food. Would you want to eat at your business?

To Find Out More

There are other pamphlets on this topic available from the Department of Human Services, including:

- *Hygienic Food Preparation and Handling*
- *Safe Food Storage and Display*
- *Food Poisoning — and How to Prevent It*

For more detailed information, there are guidelines published by Food Safety Victoria. You can get these from your local Council or from Food Safety Victoria. Training Providers can be found on the National Training Information Service website www.ntis.gov.au

Food Safety Victoria Hotline 1300 364 352
www.foodsafety.vic.gov.au

Australia New Zealand Food Authority
www.anzfa.gov.au

**Department of Human Services
Disease Control and Research Branch**
www.dhs.vic.gov.au/phd

Food Safety Victoria is a program within the Department of Human Services and is responsible for promoting and monitoring safe food practices in all Victorian food businesses.

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Personal Hygiene

for People Working with Food



Hygiene

Food poisoning is a serious health problem. As a person who handles food — whether you are a kitchen hand, a food process worker, a shop assistant or a sandwich hand — you have an important responsibility to handle food safely.

By storing, displaying and handling food safely, you:

- Protect other people from getting sick
- Protect your job
- Protect your reputation in the food industry
- Protect your business.

One case of food poisoning can close down a business

Personal Hygiene

An important way to prevent food contamination is to maintain a high standard of personal hygiene and cleanliness.

Even healthy people carry food poisoning bacteria on their bodies. By touching parts of your body, such as your nose, mouth, hair or bottom, you can spread bacteria from your hands to the food.

Wash Your Hands

Washing your hands thoroughly is a good way to reduce the chance of contaminating food with bacteria. Wash your hands with soap and warm water and don't forget the backs of your hands, wrists, between your fingers and under your fingernails.

Thoroughly dry your hands immediately after you wash them. Always dry your hands with a disposable paper towel or under an air dryer, not on a tea towel and never on your clothes.

Wash your hands before handling food, and wash them again frequently during work.

When to Wash Your Hands

Wash your hands before handling food. Wash them frequently during work.

You must wash your hands after:

- Going to the toilet
- Handling raw food
- Blowing your nose
- Handling garbage
- Touching your ears, nose, mouth or other parts of the body
- Smoking
- Every break
- Handling animals.

Other Ways Bacteria Can Spread

There are other ways to spread bacteria. In a food handling or food storage area, you should never:

- Smoke
- Chew gum
- Spit
- Change a baby's nappy
- Eat.

Hair, jewellery and clothing can also contain and spread bacteria:

- If you have long hair, tie it back or cover it
- Wear only plain banded rings
- Wear only plain sleeper earrings
- Wear clean protective clothing over normal clothes.

Also, keep your nails short so they are easy to clean. Do not wear nail polish, which can chip into the food. Keep your spare clothes and other personal items away from where food is stored and prepared.

Cuts and Wounds

If you have cuts or wounds, make sure they are completely covered by a waterproof wound strip or a bandage. If the wound is on your hands, disposable gloves should be worn over the top of the wound strip.

Both the wound strip and gloves should be changed regularly. Use wound strips which are brightly coloured, so they can be easily seen if they fall off.