

They should also be changed frequently to minimize build-up of perspiration and bacteria inside the glove.

May I use the same pair of disposable gloves to prepare raw meat or poultry, and then prepare ready-to-eat food?

No. This is called cross-contamination. Disposable gloves worn during preparation of raw foods, such as uncooked meat and poultry, must not be used to prepare ready-to-eat food. Use raw food gloves just for raw foods, and ready-to-eat food gloves just for those foods.

How can ready-to-eat foods be prepared during grill and slicing operations?

A glove can be worn on the hand that is used to prepare ready-to-eat ingredients, leaving the other hand uncovered for placing raw ingredients on the grill. Wear tight fitting gloves when operating a slicing machine or chopping or cutting food.

If you have questions concerning this information, contact your local health department.



Department of Health

Use of
HANDS
In
Preparation of
Ready-to-Eat
Foods



Since 1985, contact by infected food service workers with ready-to-eat foods has been the third most frequently reported cause of foodborne illness in New York State. In response to Chapter 529 of the Laws of 1991, new State Sanitary Code regulations were developed and became effective August 19, 1992. These regulations prohibit bare hand contact with foods that will not be later cooked or reheated before serving.

These State Sanitary Code changes were made after informational sessions and meetings with food service establishment operators and regulators and other food industry representatives.

The following information should assist food establishment operators to understand the new regulations.

What kind of foods may not be prepared with bare hands?

Ready-to-eat foods, such as salads and sandwiches; food that is not later cooked to a temperature required by the State Sanitary Code; and food that is not later reheated to 165° F before serving.

What are acceptable practices to prepare ready-to-eat foods?

The use of utensils, tongs, deli paper or sanitary gloves is acceptable for preparing ready-to-eat food.

May ready-to-eat foods be touched with bare hands if the hands are washed, or a germicidal soap or hand sanitizer is used?

No. Although handwashing is effective in reducing contamination, people forget to wash their hands. In addition, hands are not always washed thoroughly. Germicidal soaps and hand sanitizers have not been proven effective in destroying viruses.

What happens if gloves, tongs, deli paper or other utensils are not available to prepare ready-to-eat foods?

If appropriate utensils are not available, ready-to-eat foods may not be prepared until bare hand contact with food can be prevented. If bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods is observed by health department inspectors, a violation will be recorded on the inspection report and enforcement action may be taken. Any ready-to-eat food that has been prepared with bare hands is considered to be contaminated and should be discarded.

How often should disposable gloves be changed?

Disposable gloves must be changed when they become contaminated, soiled or torn, or when the food service worker leaves the food preparation area.