

No Bare Hand Contact



PUBLIC HEALTH REASONS:

The three critical factors in reducing foodborne illness transmitted through the fecal-oral route include: exclusion/restriction of ill food workers; proper handwashing; and no bare hand contact with RTE foods. Each of these factors is inadequate when utilized independently and may not be effective. However, when all three factors are combined and utilized properly, transmission of fecal-oral pathogens can be controlled. Handwashing with plain soap and water, as specified in the Food Code, may not be an adequate intervention on its own to prevent the transmission of pathogenic microbes to RTE foods via bare hand contact with RTE foods.

FOOD CODE, OAR 603-25-0030, CHAPTER 3-301.11 (B)

Food workers can spread illness in the food service environment when their hands come into contact with food.

The Food Code does not allow bare hand contact with ready-to-eat (RTE) food. RTE foods are those foods that do not require any more preparation before they are ready to eat. This includes raw, washed and cut fruits and vegetables, and foods that require no additional cooking such as sandwiches, salads, and bread. Food workers must use “suitable” utensils when handling RTE foods.

Suitable means of handling RTE foods include using: deli tissue, tongs, forks & other serving utensils, spatulas, and non-latex single-use gloves.

Ingredients that are used exclusively in food products that are subsequently fully cooked, such as pizza, are not considered RTE and may be handled with bare hands.

Gloves and other barriers do not replace handwashing. Always wash your hands before putting gloves on and when changing to a new pair.

You should change gloves at the following times:

- As soon as they become soiled or torn.
- Before beginning a different task.
- After handling raw meat, fish, or poultry and before handling RTE food.

Never wash or reuse disposable gloves. Latex gloves should not be used, since allergens from the gloves may transfer to food and cause an allergic reaction in some individuals.



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