FACT SHEET 5

Gloves

Why wear gloves?

Gloves are used to protect the food that you are preparing from any contamination that may be on your hands. They are not to keep your hands clean when handling food.

Gloves are not a legal requirement; however public perception is that they must be used when handling food.

If food can be handled with clean hands then gloves do not need to be worn. Hands can be kept clean by either regular hand washing as required (refer Food Fact Sheet No. 4) or the use of Antibacterial Hand Gel in place of hand washing. Tongs and other utensils are another useful way to prevent contamination.

If you choose to use gloves as a part of your business practice you must ensure that they are used correctly.

When should gloves be changed?

Gloves need to be changed:

- When changing tasks;
- After coughing / sneezing;
- After touching hair / scalp / skin or body opening;
- After touching any other item that may contaminate food ie: waste;
- If the glove/s become damaged.

It is also recommended that gloves are changed every half an hour even if doing one continual task as this assists in maintaining hands free from skin conditions caused by the continual use of latex or rubber gloves.

Glove changing

- Hands must be washed in between each glove change. This is because hands become very hot and sweaty when gloves are worn, which provides an ideal environment for the growth of bacteria. Once the gloves are removed, these bacteria will contaminate everything you touch, including the new gloves.

Glove Important Points

- Gloves are used to protect the food you are handling from contamination from your hands, not to protect you from the food.
- Gloves are not a legal requirement, however if you choose to wear them they must be used correctly.
- Gloves must be changed when you change tasks or as often as you would wash your hands (refer Food Fact Sheet No. 4), as well as if the glove is damaged.
- Hands must be washed after every glove change.
- Regular hand washing, the use of an antibacterial gel or utensils are just as effective in protecting food from potential contamination.

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