

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Spring 2009

Spotlight on Food Borne Illness

SALMONELLOSIS



WHAT IS SALMONELLOSIS?

Salmonellosis, or better known as Salmonella, is an infection caused by the salmonella bacteria. Salmonella is commonly reported in the United States, but different types of the Salmonella species vary worldwide. The different types can cause disease in both animals and people. The bacteria can be found in water, soil, insects, domestic and wild animals and the human intestinal tract. Once infected, the illness may last 1 to 2 days, and symptoms may include the following:

- Abdominal Cramps
- Headache
- Nausea
- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting (occasionally)

HOW CAN I BECOME INFECTED?

Salmonella can be transmitted by the ingestion of contaminated food derived from infected animals or contaminated by feces of an infected animal or person. It may be found on the following type of foods:

- Poultry and poultry salads
- Meat and meat products
- Fish & shrimp
- Shell eggs and egg products (custards, sauces, and pastry creams)
- Tofu and other protein foods (peanuts)
- Sliced melons, vegetables



WHAT CAN I DO TO PROTECT MYSELF AND OTHERS?

- Avoid cross-contamination
- Refrigerate foods
- Thoroughly cook poultry to at least 165°F for at least 15 seconds and cook other food to their minimum internal temperatures
- Properly cool cooked meats & meat products within 6 hours
- Avoid pooling eggs - use a pasteurized egg product

- Thoroughly wash, rinse, and sanitize: utensils, cutting boards, and food contact surfaces to avoid cross-contamination
- Ensure that employees are practicing good personal hygiene



Renewal Time is Almost at Hand: DON'T FORGET!

Applications for retail food license renewals for the period of April 1, 2009 - March 31, 2010 are now being mailed to your establishments. Take the time to review and complete your applications. If your establishment does not receive an application by mail, please stop by the Health Department, where you can be assisted with the application process. **Please take note that vending machine licenses must be renewed at the same time.**

- New businesses that purchased a 2008 retail food license in the last few months will still be required to renew for 2009 by March 31st.
- Establishments that are designated as non-profit (i.e. schools, churches, etc.) are still required to submit a completed renewal application.
- Late fees will be charged on all renewals received /postmarked after April 1st. Late fees: \$50.00 for licenses under \$200 - or - \$100 for licenses \$200 and over.
- Establishments that received two (2) conditional ratings during the 2008 licensing period will receive a 50% increase in their renewal fee.
- Pursuant to the City of Englewood Revised Health Code, it is unlawful to operate a retail food establishment without a current and valid license.
- Remember to post your retail food license in a place where the public can easily view it.

The Health Department will take legal action against those establishments that fail to renew their license.

TAKE THE TIME, TO AVIOD THE FINE...\$\$\$

Bare Hand Contact of Ready to Eat Foods

It has come to our attention that some food service establishments do not use suitable equipment and utensils as protective devices to reduce or eliminate bare hand contact of ready to eat foods. These foods include, but are not limited to:

BURGERS, COLD CUTS, CHEESE, SANDWICHES, CAKES, PASTRIES, SALADS, BREAD, AND FRUIT.



According to Chapter 24 of the NJ State Sanitary Code, “Sanitation in Retail Food Establishments and Food and Beverage Vending Machines,”

8:24 - 3.3 Protection from Contamination after Receiving:

- (a) Requirements for preventing contamination from hands include the following:
1. Food employees shall wash their hands before handling food.
 2. Food employees may not contact exposed, ready-to-eat food with their bare hands and shall use suitable utensils such as deli tissue, spatulas, tongs, single-use gloves, or dispensing equipment.

This means that whenever you are making sandwiches, slicing cold cuts, handling fruits and vegetables, making salads, or handling pastries, you **MUST** be wearing gloves. Any food that will not be thoroughly cooked or reheated after it is prepared is considered a Ready-to-Eat Food. Customers do not want to have to guess what an employee was doing before they started making their sandwich.



A question and answer sheet on the use of hand gloves can be found on the following page, and will help in clarifying any questions you may have regarding hand glove use in food establishments.



What is the main reason for washing hands and not touching ready-to-eat food with bare hands?

The main reason for not touching ready-to-eat foods with bare hands is to prevent viruses and bacteria which are present in your body from contaminating the food. Viruses & bacteria are invisible to the naked eye, but may be present on your hands if you do not wash them thoroughly, particularly after using the restroom. The law prohibits bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods and requires good hand washing by food service workers.

When am I required to wash my hands?

- Before starting work;
- Before putting on single service gloves
- After using the bathroom;
- After touching raw, fresh, or frozen beef, poultry, fish or meat;
- **Eat food**
- After mopping, sweeping, removing garbage, or using the phone;
- After smoking, eating, sneezing, or drinking;
- After touching anything that might result in contamination of hands



How can I prepare or serve ready-to-eat food to avoid contact with my bare hands?

You may use any of the following to prepare or serve foods without bare hand contact: torn,



- Tongs;
- Forks & spoons;
- Deli paper;
- Disposable gloves;
- Waxed paper;
- Napkins;
- Spatulas

What kinds of foods may not be touched with bare hands?

- Cold meats and sandwiches;
- Salads and salad ingredients;
- Prepared fresh fruit & vegetables served raw;
- Bread, toast, rolls, and baked goods;
- Garnishes such as lettuce, parsley, lemon wedges, potato chips, or pickles on plates;
- Ice served to the customer
- Fruit or vegetables for mixed drinks;
- Any food that will not be thoroughly cooked or reheated



What is good Hand Washing?

All employees involved with food preparation must wash their hands and exposed portions of their arms with soap and water. Thorough hand washing is done by vigorously rubbing together the surfaces of lathered hands and arms for at least 20 seconds followed by a thorough rinse with clean water. Use a single-service towel or hot air dryer to dry hands. No special soaps are needed.



Am I required to wear disposable sanitary gloves?

Chapter 24 of the State Sanitary Code states that food employees **may not** contact exposed, ready-to-eat food with their bare hands. Wearing disposable sanitary gloves is one of several acceptable ways to comply with this law.

What can I do with a Ready-to-eat item if it was touched with bare hands?

You can either heat the food thoroughly to the temperature required for cooking by reheating, or discard the food if it was touched with bare hands.

When do I have to replace or change gloves?

Always change gloves if the gloves get ripped, or contaminated. Contamination can occur after using the bathroom, smoking, coughing, sneezing, and in between preparing raw and cooked foods. Food workers' hands must be washed thoroughly and be cleaned before wearing new gloves.



after it is prepared.

Recommendations for Sanitary Preparation of Salads

1. Refrigerate all cooked salad ingredients except seasonings and spices overnight or chill to 41°F or lower before use.
2. Purchase a sanitizing solution or prepare one by mixing two ounces of bleach to a gallon of cold water. This solution is effective for about two hours. Prepare a fresh solution if further sanitization is needed.
3. Clean work surfaces, utensils, and equipment with soap and hot water, rinse with clean water, and give a final rinse with a diluted mixture of sanitizer and water.
4. Thoroughly wash hands with soap and hot water and dry with a single use paper towel. Use disposable plastic gloves
5. Individuals preparing salads are not to perform other tasks such as handling raw chicken or raw meat products.
6. Clean and sanitize tops of cans and jars before opening. Once opened, use up all of the content within one day, or transfer left over contents to an appropriate container.
7. Do not mix old salads with new salads. Salads should not be kept for more than two days.
8. Raw fruits and vegetables must be thoroughly washed in water to remove soil and other contaminants before being cut, combined with other ingredients, cooked, served, or offered as a ready-to-eat food.
9. Use clean and sanitized utensils in mixing and handling foods.
10. Refrigerate final salad product immediately to 41°F or below in a shallow pan not greater than 4 inches deep and keep product covered with clean plastic wrap.



REMINDER

After visiting the lavatory, wash hands well; minimize food handling with bare hands; make use of gloves, tongs, spoons, etc. for preparing and serving foods. Persons should avoid touching hands to nose, face, clothes, or hair. Lastly, persons with sore throats, colds, or sores must not handle food.

REMINDERS



Gloves, hair restraints, and utensils are a requirement for proper handling of ready-to-eat foods.



Post only the **CURRENT** retail food license and evaluation rating placard in public view and maintain inspection reports on file for 2 years.



It's time to renew your Retail Food Establishment license. Renew early and avoid late fees.



Wash, Rinse, and Sanitize cutting boards, utensils, and counter tops after preparing each food item and before you go on to the next item.



The laboratory sampling program is about to begin. We will be sampling at your establishment soon. Please refer to the **Recommendations for Sanitary Preparation of Salads** to aid in the reduction of bacterial counts.

Sources: Chapter 24 of the NJ State Sanitary Code; Control of Communicable Disease Manual, 17th Edition; and the New York City Department of Health; www.google.com (images)

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"Food For Thought" is a quarterly publication issued by the Englewood Health Department for food establishments in Englewood. This issue was prepared by Kristina Bonanni, Sr. Registered Environmental Health Specialist.

