

Working with Ready-to-Eat Foods

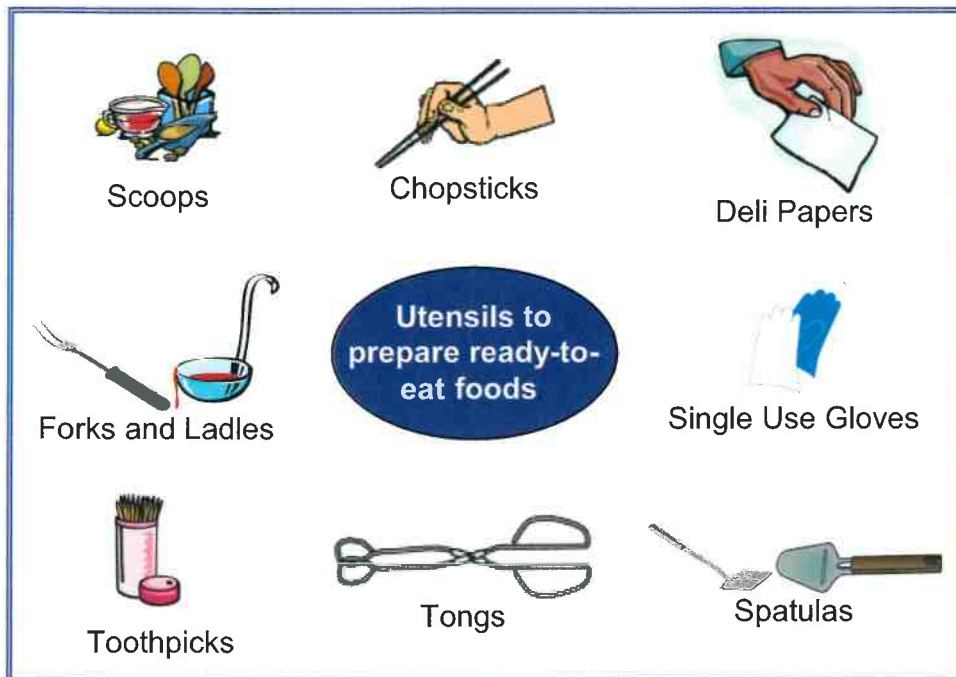
Germs can be spread from a food worker even when the food worker looks and feels healthy. To prevent spreading germs, the best thing you can do as a food worker, is wash your hands and avoid touching certain foods with your bare hands. Handwashing does not remove all of these germs from your hands, even if you do a good job. There can still be enough germs on your hands to cause illness.

In addition to proper handwashing another way to prevent spreading these illnesses is for food workers to avoid touching **ready-to-eat foods** with their bare hands. **Ready-to-eat foods** are foods that are eaten without additional cooking or washing to remove germs. You can use utensils such as scoops, tongs, or gloves to prepare and serve tacos, salads, sandwiches and other foods that are not cooked before serving. This will keep germs from your bare hands from getting on foods.

Ready-to-eat foods include:

- Any food that will NOT be cooked after final preparation, such as sushi and sandwiches
- Washed produce that is eaten raw, such as fruits and salads
- Bakery or bread items, such as toast and rolls
- Cooked foods, such as pizza and hamburgers
- Garnishes like parsley, lemon wedges, or pickles on plates
- Fruit or vegetables for mixed drinks
- Ice





Glove Use

Sometimes it will not be practical to use other utensils, such as deli paper, spatulas or tongs, to avoid bare hand contact with **ready-to-eat foods**. In these cases, you may choose to use single use gloves to prepare and serve the foods.

Even if you are using single use gloves, you will still need to **wash your hands** before you put them on. How do you know when it is time to change your gloves and wash your hands? Pay attention to these reminders for proper glove use:

1. Wash hands before putting on gloves
2. Change gloves that get ripped
3. Change gloves that get contaminated
4. Never wash or reuse gloves
5. Change gloves between working with raw and ready-to-eat foods
6. Throw gloves away after use
7. Wash hands after taking gloves off

Every time you change tasks, sneeze, or use the toilet you need to wash your hands and put on new gloves.

GLOVES are no substitute for good handwashing!

GLOVE USE REMINDERS!

Wash hands before putting on gloves.



If you wear artificial fingernails or fingernail polish – you have to wear gloves when working with exposed food.

Put gloves on only when you are ready to handle **ready-to-eat foods**.



When you change tasks, remove gloves and throw them in the trash. Use clean gloves when you resume food preparation.

Do NOT use fabric or re-usable gloves with ready-to-eat food.



If you have a cut wash your hands, put on a clean bandage, and wear gloves.