

Personal Hygiene

Fact Sheet and Hygiene Rating Improver

No. 8



It is essential that staff handling and preparing food, practice high standards of personal hygiene, to stop bacteria spreading to food.

1. Handwashing is vital

Handwashing is vital for good personal hygiene. Unwashed or poorly washed hands are the most common way bacteria are transferred to food. This is why a separate hand wash basin is required in every food preparation area for food handlers to wash their hands. Taps should be turned off using a disposable paper towel.

2. Hands should always be washed;

before commencing or resuming work; after using the toilet; after smoking; after handling rubbish; after using a tissue; after handling raw food; before handling cooked food; after any cleaning task.

Washing hands effectively

Step 1:

Wet your hands thoroughly under warm running water and squirt liquid soap onto your palm.



Step 2:

Rub your hands together palm to palm to make a lather.



Step 3:

Rub the palm of one hand along the back of the other and along the fingers. Repeat with the other hand.



Step 4:

Put your palms together with fingers interlocked and rub in between each of the fingers thoroughly.



Step 5:

Rub around your thumbs on each hand and then rub the fingertips of each hand against your palms.



Step 6:

Rinse off the soap with clean water and dry your hands thoroughly on a disposable towel. Turn off the tap with the towel and then throw the towel away.



images from the Food Standards Agency website

If you employ staff, ensure that they all use this method for effective hand washing.

3. Good Personal Hygiene is Critical

In addition to hand washing, good personal hygiene is also very important.

- All staff should wear clean clothes when working with food, these clothes should not be worn outside the food preparation area and aprons should be changed between handling raw and cooked foods.
- Tie back or cover hair.
- Staff should not wear watches or jewellery when preparing food (except a wedding band).
- Do not prepare food when you are ill, particularly if you have cold symptoms, vomiting, diarrhoea, or skin infections on the hand. If you are ill, work in an area where food is not prepared, or leave the premises. In cases of sickness and diahorrea in food handlers, leave at least 48 hours after they are well, before returning to work
- Keep fingernails short, clean and without nail polish. Cracked and long nails can harbour bacteria and nail polish can flake into food.
- Cover cuts and sores with a coloured waterproof, brightly coloured plaster.

4. Avoid the following poor practices;

touching parts of your body such as the face, nose, and ears; wiping off sweat; coughing or sneezing near food; tasting food with your fingers, or utensils that are put back into the food.

5. Management

- Ensure all staff understand the 'fitness to work policy' and which illnesses they need to report.
- Ensure staff have a separate area away from food preparation to change from their outdoor clothes before starting work.
- Ensure there are clean or disposable aprons for visitors.

Visit the **Food Standards Agency's YouTube webpage** for Training Videos on Hand Washing.

FOOD HYGIENE RATING

STEP	IMPROVE MY RATING	Done
1	Ensure all food handlers understand when to wash hands	
2	Ensure all food handlers wash their hands effectively – observe them	
3	Ensure all staff follow the personal hygiene rules	
4	Ensure the management section is complied with	