



Hand/Glove Hygiene & Food Safety

GLOVE USE GUIDE

(Coronavirus Edition)

Excellent hand hygiene has been identified by the CDC as one of the key preventative actions in minimizing the risk of Coronavirus spread. When handling food, it is also essential to wear the correct glove and follow rigorous food safety procedures.

1. GLOVE TYPE & QUALITY: NEW TECH NITRILE

Make sure you are using a quality nitrile glove, sourced from a reputable supplier with manufacturing and quality standards in place.

Be aware numerous scientific studies have shown vinyl gloves to contain microtears and holes, not visible to the naked eye, which allow bacteria or virus to pass through both to the food you are handling, and from the food to you. The average vinyl failure rate reported was **more than one out of every two gloves!**

Ask your supervisor for more information so you are protected sufficiently.

2. GLOVE MANAGEMENT

Gloves should be discarded immediately and changed:

- When the gloved hand has touched anything other than food or associated equipment - e.g. clothes, face, phone, handshake or even fist-bump.
- Every 10 minutes in a busy foodservice situation to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.
- If there are any rips or tears in the gloves.
- If you change food handling stations.
- If your food product is sticking or accumulating on the gloves.

Gloves may not be stored outside of the dispenser box (e.g. in pockets). Any gloves that spill onto surfaces or the floor must be discarded.



3. HAND HYGIENE

Following CDC recommendations, wash hands immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, and dry completely:

- After gloves are removed
- Before donning (putting on) a new pair of gloves

Antiseptic hand sanitizers may be used but are generally thought of as less effective and may degrade your disposable glove material.

Why Gloves?

The FDA Food Code stipulates “food employees may not contact exposed, ready-to-eat (RTE) food with their bare hands and shall use suitable utensils such as single-use gloves”. However, the code also highlights that “gloves may serve as a source of cross-contamination if misused”. Wearing disposable gloves alone does not prevent the spread of bacteria and viruses that can contaminate food - glove type, quality and processes must be assessed.

For a glove to effectively prevent the transmission of pathogens cleanliness, durability and barrier quality must be considered. Higher quality raw materials and production processes increase the glove’s strength, flexibility and durability, and consideration of this degree of barrier protection is essential when procuring gloves for the food industry.

CDC data indicates around 34% of all foodborne outbreaks identify bare-hand cross-contamination as a contributory cause, with 16% implicating gloves in the cross-contamination. Using the correct type of quality, clean disposable gloves, and following correct processes, gave by far the safest and best outcome in avoiding cross-contamination and foodborne illness outbreak.