

Proper Use of Gloves in Food Service

In Ontario the use of gloves for food handling is not required. However, the Food Premises Regulation does have a requirement that food is protected from contamination. Unclean hands frequently contaminate food. There is a requirement to wash hands before commencing work or resuming work with food. Therefore, there is a requirement to use tongs, spoons and scoops of corrosion resistant and nontoxic material wherever possible to avoid direct hand contact with food.

Many food premises provide gloves for food handlers to use, but this practice requires training and monitoring to ensure glove use does not contribute to contamination of food or food contact surfaces. Glove use may be appropriate in certain settings where there are task specific jobs, and gloves are changed at appropriate times. The following tips on proper glove use will ensure that gloves do not contaminate food.

It is important to remember that gloves are not a replacement for hand washing.

1. Hands must be thoroughly washed and dried before putting on gloves, when changing to a new pair of gloves, and after removing gloves
2. Gloves need to be changed frequently:
 - When changing tasks ie moving from raw to ready to eat food
 - After cleaning or handling chemicals/cleaners
 - After handling non- food equipment or money
 - After handling garbage
 - After using the washroom (gloves must not be worn into the washroom-wash your hands)
 - After blowing your nose, touching your mouth/hair/skin
 - Anytime they become soiled or torn
3. Gloves are not to be re-used once removed
4. Glove use is appropriate for employees who have cuts, sores etc. or orthopedic devices on the hands (these cannot be cleaned well)