

Food Safety Tips for Food Event Volunteers

Foodborne illness outbreaks can happen anywhere and can affect a large number of people. Many outbreaks result because a food worker may not take food safety seriously!

The good news is that a foodborne illness is preventable! Follow these tips to avoid a foodborne illness outbreak:

KEEP CLOTHES CLEAN

Dirty clothes not only give customers a bad impression, but also carry harmful microorganisms.

- Wear clean clothes.
- Wear clean aprons.
- Roll up long sleeves.
- Keep hair from falling into food! Wear hair pulled back and/or wear a cap.

KEEP HANDS CLEAN

Hand-washing is one of the easiest, most effective ways to prevent foodborne illnesses.

- Wash hands often: Before you start your shift; after handling raw foods; after coughing or blowing your nose; after handling the garbage; after using the bathroom; after you handle money.
- Wash hands with lots of soap. Soap creates a slippery surface for the “germs” to slide off.
- Scrub hands together for at least 20 seconds.
- Dry hands on a towel (paper is best). Do NOT use dish towels or apron or your clothes to dry your hands!

- If you have a cut on your hand, use plastic gloves.
- Trim fingernails and keep them clean.
- Serve food not fingers! Do NOT touch food with bare hands. Use tongs, forks, gloves, deli tissues or scoops to handle food.
- Protect foods from dust, sneezing, and handling by guests. Use appropriate packaging and covers on food.
- Never chew gum.
- Do NOT prepare food or work if you are sick with vomiting and/or diarrhea.

USE CLEAN EQUIPMENT/UTENSILS

When dirty equipment and utensils are used, microorganisms will be transferred to the food.

- Use a mechanical dishwasher OR 3 sinks for washing, rinsing and sanitizing.
- Use clean dishes and utensils for food preparation.
- Wash equipment and utensils with hot, soapy water after EACH use even if you use the same piece of equipment or utensil for preparing several foods (e.g. knife).
- Wash and sanitize food contact surfaces (e.g. counters, tables, refrigerators, etc.).

USE PROPER SANITIZING SOLUTIONS

Use chlorine bleach and water to make the following sanitizing solution:

- Washing dishes and utensils:
 1. Wash in warm soapy.
 2. Rinse in clear water.

3. Sanitize for at least 10 seconds.

Use 1 tablespoon bleach per
1 gallon of water

4. Air dry.

- Sanitize food contact surfaces (e.g. counters, tables, refrigerator, etc.):
1 tablespoon chlorine bleach to
1 gallon of water. Air dry.

USE A FOOD THERMOMETER

Eating undercooked foods has resulted in serious foodborne illness outbreaks.

- Use a food thermometer to check that foods are cooked to the proper internal temperature.
- The following foods should reach an internal temperature of:

Product	Temperature
Whole meats (chops, steaks, roasts)	145°F, plus 3 minute rest/stand time for safety
Ground meats	160°F
Poultry, ground or whole	165°F
Soup, stews, egg dishes, stuffing, casseroles	165°F

Source: USDA, Revised Cooking Temperature, May 2011

COOL FOODS CORRECTLY

Hot foods stored in large containers in the refrigerator cannot cool down quickly.

- Foods must be cooled from 140°F to 70°F within 2 hours and then cooled to 40°F or lower in an additional 4 hours.
- Store foods in small shallow pans (2-3 inches deep) and refrigerate immediately.
- Metal containers chill foods fast.
- Use ice to quickly chill foods and to keep them cold.
- Do NOT cool hot foods at room temperature before refrigeration.

KEEP HOT FOODS HOT

If hot foods are held below 140°F, microorganisms will grow rapidly.

- Keep hot foods at 140°F or higher.
- Keep food hot in a 200°F oven.
- Use a food thermometer to check the temperature of hot foods.
- Do not mix a fresh batch of a food item with an existing item.
- Do not let hot food sit at room temperature for more than 2 hours.

KEEP COLD FOODS COLD

If cold foods are held between 40°-140°F, microorganisms will grow rapidly.

- Keep cold foods at 40°F or lower.
- Do not leave cold food at room temperature for more than 2 hours.
- Refrigerate ingredients before mixing together (e.g. refrigerate potatoes and eggs before mixing with the dressing).

Reviewed/revised by Suzanne Driessen, Extension Educator, Food Safety, September 2011;. May 2013.

For more information:
extension.umn.edu/foodsafety