

Fact Sheet: Bare Hand Contact

Did You Know? In commercially run establishments it is critical that food employees minimize bare hand and arm contact with exposed ready to eat foods. Minimizing bare hand contact with ready to eat food provides an additional measure for interrupting disease transmission, when used in combination with the exclusion/restriction of ill food workers and proper hand washing.



Fact: The hazards presented by bare hand contact are a possible transfer of bacterial, viral, or parasitic pathogens from food employees' hands to the food.

Recommendations:

- Use suitable utensils such as deli tissue, spatulas, tongs, or single-use gloves.
- Implement a training program for employees instructing food employees about the hazards of bare hand contact with ready to eat foods, proper hand washing, and the principles of safe food preparation procedures.
- Ensure food employees wash hands and exposed portion of arms before returning to their work stations.
- Ensure that ill food employees not come to work when they are sick. Management may also implement protocols for Hepatitis A vaccinations.

For more information please contact the Food Safety and Hygiene Inspection Services Division (202) 535-2180