

Managers

Understand:

The law requires you to exclude anyone from work if they have an infection that can be passed on through food and there is any likelihood of them contaminating food directly or indirectly.

This would apply to people employed as food handlers or to other staff working in areas where open food is handled

Diarrhoea and/or vomiting are the main symptoms of infections that can be transmitted through food

Other symptoms can include Stomach cramps or pain, nausea and fever. Skin infections are also a problem

This is because some infections, mainly from bacteria and viruses, can spread in faeces and vomit. This can contaminate infected persons' hands when they have diarrhoea or vomiting. Vomiting can also spread it directly. If an infected person contaminates food or food contact surface, in many cases the infection can spread to people who eat the food.

Action to take:

Ensure that all staff handling food and anyone working in a food handling area knows to report the symptoms of infection and if they have close contact with someone with these symptoms

Exclude staff with these symptoms from working with or around open food.

Returning to work:

The exclusion period is normally 48 hours from when symptoms stop naturally. Different action is required in special cases.

When excluded staff return to work ensure that they take extra hygiene precautions, particularly hand washing

Not all cases of diarrhoea or vomiting are infections, eg morning sickness, so exclusion is not always needed.

Other facts:

People can have infections without symptoms so it is important that managers try to ensure that everyone washes and dries their hands regularly at work, especially after using the toilet

Managers should assess the risk of food safety of anyone found to have been working with or around food whilst infectious and take the appropriate action to ensure that unsafe food is not released.

If you are not sure what to do in any situation, you can seek advice from Environmental Health.



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Fitness To Work

Your responsibilities as a food handler



You can pass on illnesses when you work with or around food.

To prevent this:

Tell the manager immediately if you are ill

Wash and dry your hands with soap and warm water, especially after going to the toilet

You can affect the safety of food when working with or around it:

Your hands and clothes can spread harmful bacteria or viruses to food or surfaces that will come into contact with food

These bacteria or viruses can come from you if you are ill

Tell the manager if you have:

Diarrhoea or vomiting

Stomach pain, nausea, fever or jaundice

Someone living with you with diarrhoea or vomiting

Infected skin, nose or throat

If you fall ill at work:

Seek to leave the food handling area and tell your manager what has happened.

When returning to work after an illness:

Take extra care when washing your hands

Tell the manager if they don't know you were ill, for example If you were ill on holiday.

Wash and dry your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water before working with any food, especially after going to the toilet, Also wash your hands after handling anything that might be contaminated and throughout the day.

Avoidance is better than removal—where practical try not to touch things that might require you to then wash your hands.

Good Hand Washing reduces the spread of illness - like colds and flu

Follow these six steps



Wet hands, apply liquid soap, rub hands palm to palm



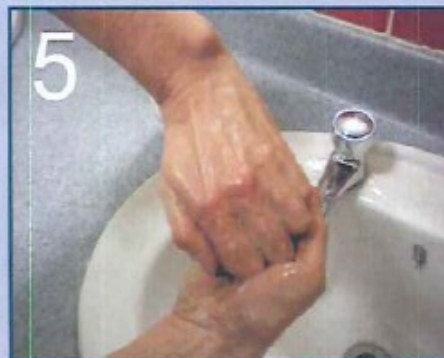
Rub backs of both hands and between fingers



Rub hands to palm and between fingers



Rub both thumbs with a twisting action



Link hands and rub backs of fingers in palms



Rub both palms with finger tips, rinse hands and dry thoroughly