

## How Food Handlers Can Contaminate Food

Food handlers can cause illness when they transfer microorganisms to food they touch. Many times these microorganisms come from the food handlers themselves. Food handlers can contaminate food when:

- ✓ They have a food borne illness
- ✓ They show symptoms of gastrointestinal illness (an illness relating to the stomach or intestine)
- ✓ They live with or are exposed to a person who is ill
- ✓ They touch anything that may contaminate their hands

Even an apparently healthy person may be hosting food borne pathogens. With some illnesses, such as hepatitis A, a person is at the most infectious stage of the disease for several weeks before symptoms appear. With other illnesses, the pathogens may remain in a person's system for months after all signs of infection have ceased. Some people are called carriers, because they might carry pathogens and infect others, yet never become ill themselves. Since it is so easy to contaminate food, food handlers must pay close attention to what they do with their hands, maintain good personal hygiene, make sure preparation area is clean, utensils/cutting boards are clean and sanitized.

## The 11 Kitchen Rules of When You Should Wash Your Hands

1. Before and after changing gloves
2. After using the restroom
3. Before & after handling raw food
4. After touching your hair, face, or body
5. After coughing or sneezing into your hand
6. When switching from one task to another
7. After handling any chemicals
8. After clearing tables or busing dirty dishes
9. After sweeping, mopping, or taking out the trash
10. Before & after breaks, after eating, drinking, or smoking
11. Any time you encounter something that can contaminate your hands

## Temperature

Most food borne microorganisms grow well between the temperatures of 41 to 135 degrees. This range is known as the temperature danger zone. Exposing microorganisms outside the danger zone does not necessarily kill them. Refrigeration temperatures, for example may only slow their growth, but still allow them to grow. The best way to destroy or kill many disease causing bacteria in food is to heat foods to a high temperature.

# St. Vincent de Paul Volunteer Program Food Handler Certificate

After reviewing food handler procedures, answer the following questions.  
Every Food handler/server is required to complete this exam.

## ANSWER THE FOLLOWING CIRCLE TRUE OR FALSE:

1. T F      A good way to destroy or kill many disease causing bacteria (germs) in food is to heat foods to a high temperature.
2. T F      To prevent food borne illness and infectious hepatitis, hands should be washed thoroughly with soap and water after using the restroom, smoking or eating.
3. T F      Bacteria can be spread to food by dirty cooking utensils, preparation tables, cutting boards or hands.
4. T F      Storing foods below 41°F can prevent many food borne illnesses.
5. T F      Frequent hand washing is important in helping to prevent food borne illness.
6. T F      Hands must be washed thoroughly with soap and water before using gloves and when changing gloves.

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

GROUP: \_\_\_\_\_