



PREVENTING CROSS CONTAMINATION

Cross contamination is the transfer of harmful bacteria from one food or surface to another by means of an unclean food surface such as utensils, equipment, or human hands coming into contact with food. This can also take place from product to product transfer.

Examples of cross contamination may include the following. If a cutting board used for cutting meat has not been cleaned and sanitized before using the same board for chopping vegetables, cross contamination will occur and foodborne illness may result. Storage of raw chicken over lettuce is another example of potential cross contamination. Employees with poor hand washing practices may contaminate utensils or cooked foods. Improper washing or sanitizing of utensils, counters, boards or knives can result in bacteria transferring to another object or person, simply by touching them.

The following safe food handling practices used to prevent cross contamination:

- Employees must follow proper hand washing practices at all times.
- Follow proper use of disposable gloves - change gloves as often as you must wash your hands.
- Use utensils or disposable gloves when handling ready-to-eat foods.
- Do not use common utensils or preparation areas for raw and cooked or ready-to-eat food products without proper cleaning and sanitizing.
- Store raw meats, fish, and poultry below or separate from cooked foods or ready-to-eat foods.
- Follow proper use and concentration of sanitizers for wiping cloths in the work area.
- Avoid using multiple use towels for hand washing or wiping hands during food preparation. No side towels.
- Wash, rinse, and sanitize equipment, utensils, knives, and dishes after each use and when preparing foods for individuals with allergies.
- Provide separate utensils for each food on a buffet line.