

WSGW RADIO PRESENTATION

To Glove or Not to Glove

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The amount of bacteria we harbor on our bodies and the degree to which we shed these bacteria from the surface of our bodies may surprise you. Our skin cells are constantly being shed. As they leave our body, each cell can carry anywhere from 1,000 to 10,000 viable bacteria. In the food service industry, this can be a major problem.

The current Michigan Food Code prohibits bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods. This means restaurants must have single-use gloves for their workers to prevent bare hand contact and they also must have proper procedures in place to prevent it.

When used appropriately, single use gloves can help prevent the spread of disease causing organisms to ready-to eat foods.

Most gloves in the food handling environment are disposable. They range in materials from vinyl to natural rubber latex to nitrile.

Vinyl gloves can be of minimum quality for quick, slip-on/slip-off applications. They are usually the most inexpensive.

Nitrile gloves are made of synthetic rubber and are a good alternative for workers with latex allergies.

Latex gloves are made out of rubber and are biodegradable, but some people have allergies.

Requirements for glove use:

- They must be correctly sized to the hand
- Changed between handling raw foods and cooked or ready-to-eat foods
- Discarded when torn, contaminated, or removed for any reason
- Changed to minimize build-up of perspiration and bacteria inside the glove
- Never immersed past the cuff
- Never reused under any circumstances.

Remember to always wash and dry hands before donning gloves and after removing gloves, as research has shown that bacteria can collect in the perspiration under the gloves.

www.saginawpublichealth.org

Source: Gloves and Hand Hygiene for Food Safety
 Occupational Health and Safety