Glove Best Practices:
Guidelines to Optimise Food Safety

Glove Selection

Commercial trials are recommended to ensure optimal glove performance for the food type handled and tasks undertaken. Glove specifications are a guidance only and should not be solely relied upon—glove performance is also dependent on product quality.

Glove Type:

- Nitrile gloves are recommended for most food handling and come in a variety of thickness's & strengths suited to differing tasks & products
- Stretch poly gloves are for short use and quick-serve situations only.
- Vinyl gloves are not recommended as a food-safe option.
- Latex gloves are not recommended for food contact as they can cause consumer and glove wearer allergic reactions

Durability: Review strength and elongation test results—a prerequisite for examination-grade gloves only.

Thickness: Focusing on specific thickness's is discouraged. Gloves must be sufficiently thick to handle job demands without excess ripping (commercial trials will verify quality), excessive thickness hinders work efficiency and dexterity.

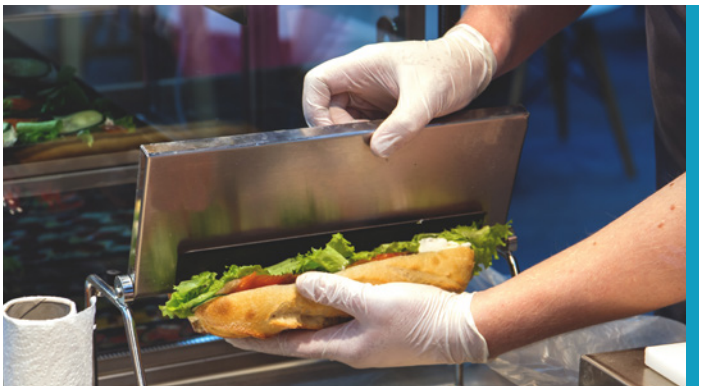
Chemical Resistance: Extra cuff length (>240mm) and chemical resistance are essential when dealing with chemical and biological hazards.

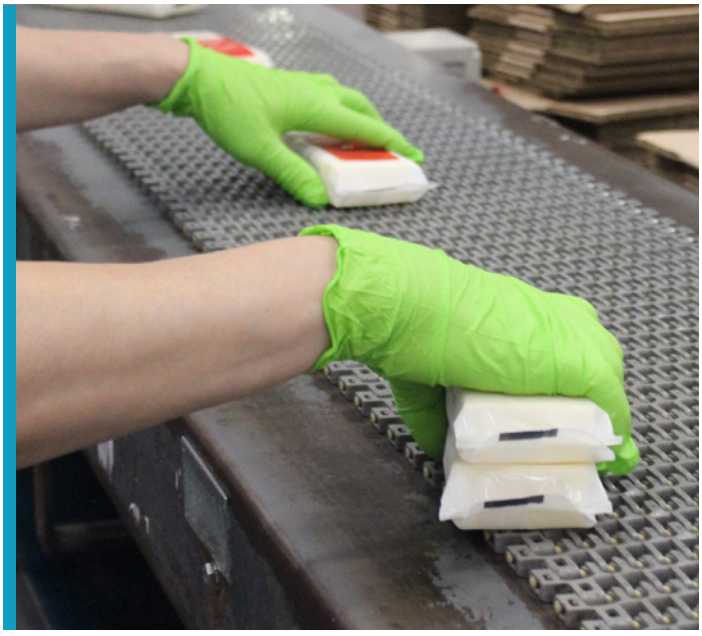
Puncture Resistance: Required when working with sharp objects.

AQL **(Acceptable Quality Level or pinhole defects)**: Exam grade (AQL 2.5 or lower) recommended to meet cGMP regulatory compliance and reduce cross-contamination risk. FDA (21 CFR 177) compliant certification is required for food handling.

Independent Testing: Because FDA food-compliant gloves are not tested on arrival to the US, independent testing of gloves is recommended to ensure consistent glove quality and safety.

Fit & Size: A selection of sizes available for differing hand sizes will enhance work efficiency and reduce the risk of physical contamination (glove pieces).



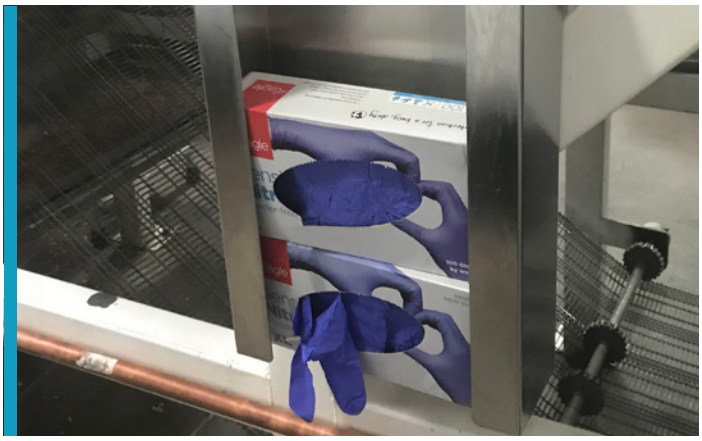


Glove Colour

Color coding gloves to work tasks, areas and/or food types can reduce cross-contamination, especially when handling raw animal proteins vs ready-to-eat (RTE) foods. Colors provide a simple and effective visual cue for wearers and managers.

Color choice is industry/company dependent, suggested colors are:

- White, blue or purple: Handling RTE foods that do not undergo a kill or wash step to remove foodborne disease pathogens. Blue or purple gloves allow for easy identification, should glove parts be found in food.
- Orange or red: Handling raw meat (beef, pork etc)
- Yellow: Handling raw poultry (chicken, turkey)
- Green: Raw produce, seafood, allergens
- Black: Maintenance, sanitation and cleaning



Glove Dispensing

Gloves must be dispensed from the glove box only; gloves must not be dispensed from clothing or other means.

Standardised dispensing techniques between departments and stores are recommended to align company food safety and HACCP plans.

For optimal time efficiency, glove boxes should be situated within arm's reach of hand washing stations, preferably in specific wall-mounted glove dispensers & not placed on food contact surfaces.

Donning (Putting on) Gloves

Correct techniques are essential to minimize cross-contamination risks.

Wash Hands: Hand hygiene is crucial before donning gloves. Properly wash your hands with soap and water to reduce the risk of transferring contaminants onto the gloves and/or onto food should gloves rip.

Dry Hands: Ensure hands are completely dry before putting on gloves. Wet hands can compromise glove integrity and comfort.

Proper Technique: When putting on gloves, hold them by the cuff to avoid touching the exterior surface with bare hands. Ensure the glove covers your fingers, palm, and wrist completely.

Glove Use

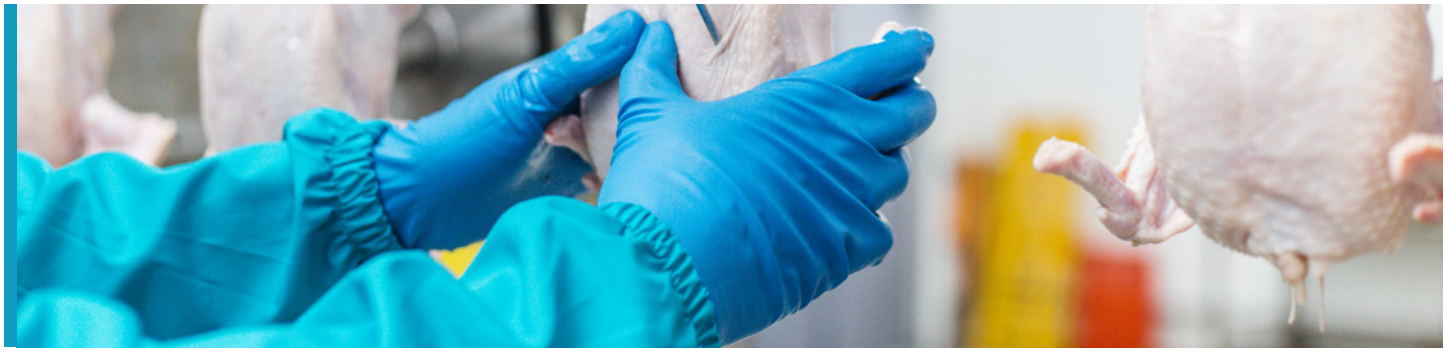
Disposable gloves are not a substitute for proper hand hygiene; they should be used once (never reused) and then discarded.

The highest risk of glove cross-contamination occurs when:

1. Gloves handling contaminated raw protein (chicken or ground beef) then touch food-contact and non food-contact surfaces. Pathogens can then be picked up and transferred by other food handlers.
2. After handling raw foods, a food handler switches to handling RTE food and changes their gloves without washing their hands and forearms properly. They then must touch the gloves to put them on, therefore contaminating the new pair.
3. While wearing gloves, the food handler touches their face, hair or any surface that may introduce contaminants.

Gloves must be changed (to prevent cross-contamination):

- If they become heavily soiled, damaged, or torn.
- If switching tasks, especially from processed or raw food to handling RTE food.
- When leaving the work area, including any breaks.
- Prolonged use of gloves can reduce their effectiveness and increase pathogen adherence.



Doffing (Taking off) Gloves

Careful removal is essential to avoid cross-contamination.

It is recommended gloves are removed at hand washing stations to avoid contaminating hands and/or surrounding surfaces:

1. Pinch and hold the outside of one glove near the wrist with your other gloved hand.
2. Peel the glove off, turning it inside out as you go.
3. Hold the removed glove in the hand with the remaining gloved hand.
4. Slide your fingers under the remaining glove without touching the outside surface.
5. Peel it off, turning it inside out.
6. Immediately wash hands.

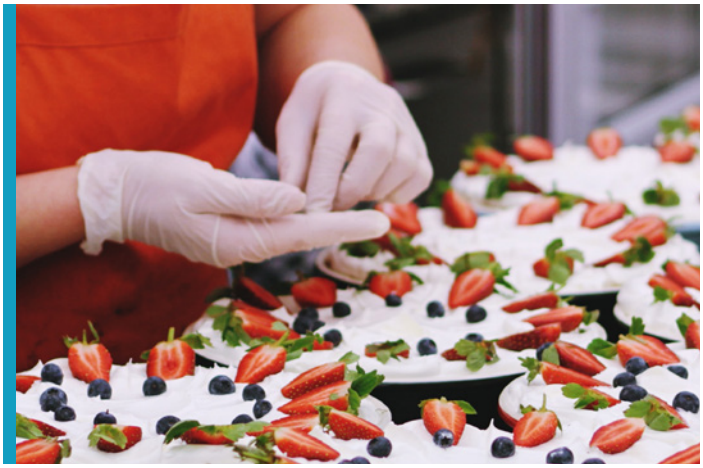
Disposal: Dispose of used gloves in designated containers, which are typically labelled as biohazard waste or general waste, depending on the task.

Hand Hygiene After Glove Removal

After removing gloves, wash hands immediately with soap and water. This step helps reduce resident microbes on the skin and in nails and any potential contaminants that may have come in contact with your skin during glove use.

Hand Sanitiser: Only for use in situations where soap and water are not available. Use hand sanitiser with at least 60% alcohol as an alternative for hand hygiene.

NOTE: Sanitiser chemicals and some alcohol-based hand sanitisers can weaken some glove material if dispensed directly onto gloves.



Glove Maintenance

Regular Change: Change gloves regularly, especially if they become soiled or damaged. Prolonged use can reduce effectiveness, especially depending on glove type.

Storage: Store gloves in a clean, dry, and designated area away from potential contaminants. Extreme temperature exposure is discouraged as this can weaken the glove material. Proper storage helps maintain glove integrity.

Follow Manufacturer Recommendations: For glove usage and shelf life to ensure optimal protection.

By following these detailed guidelines, you can enhance workplace safety, reduce the risk of direct and cross-contamination and promote good hygiene practices when working with gloves in food various handling settings.

NOTE: *The FDA Food Code discourages bare-hand contact with RTE food and recommends the use of suitable utensils, such as single-use gloves when handling these food items.*