

Kitchen Angels

Standard Precautions in Food Preparation: Safety Guidelines for Kitchen Volunteers

What are Standard Precautions?

Standard Precautions refer to the usual and ordinary steps all persons need to take in order to reduce their risk of infection from blood borne pathogens. They are **standard** because they refer to steps that need to be taken *in all cases*, not only when a known infection exists. They are **precautions** because they require foresight and planning to avoid exposure.

You may have heard of the term Universal Precautions; this term was changed to Standard Precautions in 1996. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines Standard Precautions as: *A set of precautions designed to prevent transmission of HIV, Hepatitis B, and other blood borne pathogens when providing first aid or health care. Under Standard Precautions, blood and certain body fluids of all patients are considered potentially infectious for HIV, HBV, and other blood borne pathogens.*

Why Do I Need to Be Concerned About Universal Precautions as a Kitchen Angels Volunteer?

You may be asking yourself why do I need to worry about Standard Precautions—Kitchen Angels doesn't provide health care services. You need to know about Standard Precautions because when you are preparing food, accidents can happen. You may cut yourself with a knife and get blood on the knife, on a cutting board, and/or on a counter top. Your blood may also get into the food you are preparing for our clients.

You also need to be aware of possible transmission of blood borne pathogens if you have cuts, scratches, or other breaks in your skin because these can start bleeding at any time. You will ALWAYS need to wear gloves if you have any skin breaks on your hands or wrists or are wearing any type of bandage.

The blood borne pathogens we are most concerned with include the ones that are the most frequently transmitted—Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C. The Hepatitis B virus can live outside the body—even when infected blood is completely dried on an environmental surface—for up to 7 days. The Hepatitis C virus in dried blood on a surface can survive for up to 3 weeks.

Body fluids that do not require Standard Precautions include nasal secretions, sputum, sweat, tears, and vomitus, unless visible blood is seen in them.

All the procedures in this policy are in compliance with current U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements.

When I get a cut, what do I do?

If you get a cut during your shift, stop what you are doing IMMEDIATELY and alert the Kitchen Manager. There is a first aid kit always available that you can use to clean and bandage your cut. If you need help, the Kitchen Manager will assist you. The first aid kit is located across from the Maintenance Room on the wall and is plainly labeled and is updated regularly by the company service person. Don't touch anything, including the first aid kit—have someone help you so you do not get blood anywhere, including on the first aid kit.

Clean and bandage your cut in the rest room—NEVER in the sinks in the kitchen. Use warm, running water and soap and apply rubbing alcohol and/or an antibiotic cream (available in the First Aid Kit) to the cut and bandage.

If you are able to return to your work, you must wear a **Glove** at all times. We have latex-free gloves available at every kitchen shift. If the cut is bleeding profusely, you may need to change gloves or stop working. Talk with the Kitchen Manager who can assess your situation and make a decision about your continuing to work your shift

What do I need to know about using gloves?

- ALWAYS wear gloves when you have cuts, scratches, or other breaks in your skin
- ALWAYS wear gloves when cleaning up a blood spill and when disposing of contaminated items
- Never reuse a glove—gloves are single use only
- Never wear sharp or pointy rings under gloves—they may break the gloves
- When wearing gloves do NOT touch your face or nose or mouth; if you do you need to wash your hands and re-glove to avoid contamination
- Always remove gloves prior to touching non-contaminated objects
- Remove gloves promptly after use and wash hands thoroughly
- When changing gloves, wash your hands before putting on new gloves
- To remove gloves:
 - Pinch palm of glove on 1 hand and pull glove down and off fingers
 - Form glove into a ball and place in palm of gloved hand
 - Insert 2 fingers of ungloved hand under inside rim of gloved hand and push glove inside out and down over fingers and around balled up glove
 - Grasp inside out gloves and discard into a plastic bag
 - Wash hands

What is the proper way to wash my hands?

- Wash hands with warm, running water
- Apply liquid soap and water
- Wash hands thoroughly using a circular motion, wash between fingers, palmer and dorsal (back of) surfaces, and wrists—wash for as long as it takes to sing to yourself one stanza of the “Birthday Song”
- Do NOT turn off the faucet
- Rinse and dry hands well
- Use a paper towel to turn off water (to prevent recontamination)

How do I clean up a blood spill?

The area where the blood spill occurred must be cleaned and sterilized as soon as possible—including the knife, cutting board, counter top, bowl or tray, kitchen utensils, or other items that were exposed to the blood.

Food and any used gloves must be disposed of properly:

- Any food that blood has gotten into must be thrown away immediately
- All used gloves must removed properly (see *What do I need to know about using gloves?*) and thrown away immediately after use
- Food and gloves should be disposed of in a double-bagged, securely tied plastic bag that will be taken to the dumpster in the back of the building immediately.
- ALWAYS wear gloves when handling plastic bags/trash with contaminated items.

Contaminated surfaces, kitchen tools, and other items must be cleaned and sterilized:

- Wash hands and put on gloves
- Wipe up the spill as much as possible with paper towel or other absorbent material
- Gently pour bleach solution onto all contaminated areas and items
- Bleach solution is made up of 1 part household bleach to 9 parts cool water; add household bleach to water and gently mix the solution; Kitchen Angels has bleach always available in the kitchen.
- Let bleach solution remain on contaminated areas or items for 20 minutes
- Wipe up remaining bleach solution
- All non-disposable cleaning materials such as mops and scrub brushes should be disinfected by saturating with bleach solution and air dried
- Any contaminated cloths or dishtowels must be placed in plastic bag, double bagged, and tied securely for transport to laundry facilities.
- Remove gloves and place in plastic bag with all soiled cleaning materials
- Double-bag and securely tie up plastic garbage bag and discard in the dumpster located behind the building (always wear gloves when disposing of plastic garbage bags with contaminated materials or food)
- Thoroughly wash hands with soap and water

What do I do if I am exposed to blood in the kitchen?

If you are exposed to blood you should wash your hands and other exposed skin with soap and hot water immediately after contact in the restroom (see *What is the proper way to wash my hands?*). If any of your mucous membranes (nose, mouth) come in contact with blood, flush the area with water for 15 minutes. Testing for HIV and Hepatitis C is available in Santa Fe at:

Southwest CARE Center, 505-989-8200

Santa Fe Public Health Office: 505-476-2600

CHRISTUS St. Vincent Regional Medical Center: 505-983-3361

For any questions regarding the Kitchen Angels *Standard Precautions in Food Preparation: Safety Guidelines for Kitchen Volunteers*, contact at 505-471-7780:

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For further information, see OSHA's Standard Number 1910.1030: Most Frequently Asked Questions Concerning the Bloodborne Pathogens Standard

www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=INTERPRETATIONS&p_id=21010