

SUBJECT: FOOD PREPARATION AND HANDLING

POLICY: All food items served to patients/residents and clients are prepared in a central kitchen according to standardized recipes. Food items will be prepared using methods and techniques designed to preserve maximum nutritive value, enhance flavor and be free of injurious organisms and substances.

DATE EFFECTIVE: _____

DATE REVISED: _____

DATE REVIEWED: Annually

APPROVED BY: _____

ISSUING DEPARTMENT: Nutritional Services

APPROVED FOR USE IN: _____

PROCEDURE:

1. The kitchen and equipment are clean; the kitchen is neat and orderly.
2. Food items are received, checked and stored properly as soon as they are delivered.
3. Food is kept refrigerated or frozen except when being handled.
 - a. Food is covered for storage.
 - b. Food is cooked as soon as possible after defrosting.
4. All food items, while being prepared, are protected against contamination from dust, flies, rodents and other vermin, unclean utensils and work surfaces, unnecessary handling, coughs and sneezes, flooding, drainage and overhead leakage, and any other source of contamination.
5. Only authorized personnel are allowed in food preparation areas.
6. Food from broken packages or swollen cans, or food with an abnormal appearance or odor will not be served.
7. All food items are prepared according to standardized recipes.
8. Recipe books are located in the major production areas: cooking, baking and salad making, as well as in the food production manager's office and the director's office.
9. It is the responsibility of the appropriate Food Service Manager to see that proper production procedures are used in the handling and preparation of all products.
10. Foods will be prepared and served with clean tongs, scoops, forks, spoons, spatulas, knives, plastic gloves or other suitable implements to minimize handling and avoid manual contact of food at all points during preparation and service.
11. There are separate areas specifically designated for salad preparation, meat-cutting and preparation and baking. Salads will not be prepared in the area where raw meats are cut and handled.
12. Techniques for preserving color, flavor, texture and nutritive value of foods are incorporated into the routine preparation and handling procedures outlined in the recipe books.

13. The Nutritional Services manager/director is responsible for teaching portion control to employees, utilizing the portion control recipe guide as a tool, and for monitoring and evaluating portions served.
14. Production sheets, specifying the exact ingredient amounts necessary for each product, including items on modified diet menus are used.
15. Quantity of production is determined by the number of servings required. The portion control guide is used as a managerial tool in forecasting production. The daily meal count/census is used for reporting resident/patient service needs.
16. Production sheets are written at least one day in advance. Necessary adjustments, due to fluctuations in need, are made on a daily or per meal basis.
17. No soiled cloths, boxes, cartons or other items that may contaminate food are placed on food preparation surfaces.
18. Individual portions of food once served will not be served again.
19. Prepared food will be transported to other areas in covered containers.
20. Single-service articles and/or disposable containers and utensils will be discarded after one use. Only dishwasher-safe containers may be reused.
21. Silverware is stored in such a manner as to encourage contact with handles only.
22. All food service equipment, including cloth pastry bags, is cleaned, sanitized, dried and reassembled after each use.
23. Meats, fish and poultry are defrosted in the refrigerator. A microwave may be utilized to defrost foods only if these foods are cooked and served immediately after defrosting.
24. All meats will be heated to a safe minimum internal temperature. Pork and pork products will be cooked thoroughly to a minimum of 160 degrees F. Stuffing will be baked in separate pans.
25. Separate cutting boards each will be used for:
 - a) Raw meat, poultry and fish;
 - b) Fruits and vegetables;
 - c) Cooked meat, poultry and fish.
 - Prepared foods are not cut on the same boards as raw foods.
 - Cutting boards are marked/color coded for clear identification.
 - Cutting boards are made of hard rubber construction (not wood) and dishwasher safe.
 - Cutting boards are washed and sanitized after each use, following dish machine or three-compartment sink methods, and are air-dried before storing.
26. All raw, unprocessed fruits and vegetables are thoroughly washed under clean, potable, running water before being cooked or served.
27. All potentially hazardous foods such as meat salads, poultry salads, egg salads, cream-filled pastries, etc. will be prepared (preferably from chilled products) with a minimum of manual contact and refrigerated before 40 degrees F immediately after preparation.
28. NO raw eggs will be served. Eggs must be cooked. Pasteurized eggs are the exception and may be served soft cooked.
29. Custards, cream fillings or similar high-protein products prepared by hot or cold processes will be kept at safe temperatures except during necessary periods of preparation.

30. All table surfaces and utensils used in food preparation shall be cleaned and sanitized prior to use. Any serving dish or utensil must be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized prior to use.
31. Leftovers must be dated, labeled, covered, cooled and stored (within 1/2-hour after cooking or service) in a refrigerator. Prior to re-serving, leftover foods shall be reheated to a minimum internal temperature of 165 degrees F for a minimum of 15 seconds.
32. Bare hands should never touch raw food directly. Tasting shall be done with a tasting spoon using proper tasting procedures. Utensils, cups, glasses and dishes shall be handled in such a way as to avoid touching surfaces that food or drink will come into contact with. Tongs or other serving utensils will be used to serve bread or other similar items.
33. All tops of canned foods will be washed prior to opening; can opener is washed and sanitized daily.
34. Foods that stand for several hours at room temperature cannot be considered safe and free from contamination and cannot be made so by refrigeration. They will be discarded.
35. No personal food items will be stored or prepared in the food preparation area of the department.

*Some of the above material was adapted from: *Policy & Procedure for Extended Care: Dining & Dietary Services*. Becker Dornier & Associates, Inc.