



Nicholas A. Toumpas
Commissioner

José Thier Montero
Director

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

29 HAZEN DRIVE, CONCORD, NH 03301-6527
603-271-4589 1-800-852-3345 Ext 4589
Fax 603-271-4859 TDD Access: 1-800-735-2964



FDA Employee Health and Personal Hygiene Interactive Resource Disk Available

August 2011

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is releasing the Employee Health and Personal Hygiene Interactive Resource Disk for use by foodservice establishments and retail food stores in preventing transmission of foodborne pathogens that are often transmitted by sick food employees. The disk includes an interactive tool to assist the persons in charge of these establishments make the correct decisions to prevent sick employees from working with food. In addition, it contains several FDA resource documents such as the 2009 FDA Food Code, an Employee Health and Personal Hygiene Handbook, a recording of a satellite broadcast on “Using Employee Health and Personal Hygiene Measures,” and education and training materials in multiple languages on employee health and personal hygiene.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention annually publishes a list of infectious and communicable diseases that are transmitted through food and the FDA Food Code lists five of the pathogens that have high infectivity and are easily transmitted to food by sick employees. These pathogens, referred to as the “Big 5,” are: Norovirus, Hepatitis A virus, *Salmonella* Typhi, *Shigella* spp., and *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) O157:H7 or other Enterohemorrhagic or Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli*.

In order to prevent transmission of the “Big 5” to food or to other persons, it is important that all employees working with food are fully aware of their responsibility to report symptoms, diagnosis, past illness, and history of exposure associated with these pathogens. The interactive tool follows a question and answer format and focuses on symptoms associated with the “Big 5” pathogens, including vomiting, diarrhea, jaundice, and sore throat with fever. When the person in charge is informed of employee symptoms or learns of a diagnosis, he or she can use the interactive tool to determine whether to notify the regulatory authority, whether to have the employee sent home or to remain at work, and when to allow the employee to return to work.

The disk is a tool that quickly provides the information needed to prevent a sick food employee from transmitting a foodborne disease. It is not meant to be used as a tool to diagnose foodborne disease or as a substitute for consultation with a regulatory authority or a health practitioner. The disk is not to be used as a substitute for state and local regulatory requirements.

For more information and to download the interactive tool beginning August 19, 2011, visit:
<http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodSafety/RetailFoodProtection/ucm266434.htm>