



SAFETY TIPS

Restaurant Cut Prevention

Hand injuries, particularly lacerations, continue to be one of the most frequent injuries in the restaurant industry and often lead to the injured employee losing time from work. Cut and laceration injuries can be attributed to a wide variety of common restaurant tasks including using cutting equipment such as slicers or food processors, the use of knives, contact with broken glass, vegetable peelers, and others. Employees must be properly trained in the safe use of all equipment and tools before they are allowed to use the equipment and this includes providing training on the safe use of knives and cutting tools. Train employees in safe cleaning procedures for all equipment such as slicers, food processors, cheese shredders, and blenders.

Cuts can be caused by:

- Cleaning equipment
- Counters
- Dishes
- Equipment
- Furniture
- Glassware
- Knives
- Preparation areas
- Utensils

You must observe the following safety rules to prevent cuts:

- After cleaning, make sure all equipment guards and safety devices are back in place.
- Allow only experienced, trained workers to sharpen knives.
- Always use push sticks or tamps to feed or remove food from machines.
- Clean the knife and store it immediately after use.
- Cut in the direction away from the body.
- Discard broken or chipped glassware.
- Do not compress garbage bags with any part of your body.
- Do not open or put your hands into an operating machine to stir contents or guide food.
- Do not operate equipment if you feel sick or drowsy. (Remember, some cold remedies can make people feel sleepy.)
- Do not place a sharp device near the edge of the countertop.
- Do not place hands near the edge of cutting blades.
- Do not place knives in soapy dishwater and make sure they are always visible.
- Do not touch any needles or unknown items when cleaning public access areas.
- Do not try to catch falling objects, especially knives.
- Do not try to clean or “just brush something off” a moving part, such as cutting blades or beaters in mixers.
- Do not try to cut anything in a slicer once it becomes too thin. Use a knife to finish cutting.
- Do not wear loose or frayed clothing, gloves, or jewelry that can become caught in the moving machine.
- Ensure that manufacturer’s instruction manuals are available for review by all employees.

- Follow all proper training procedures when operating the tools and equipment.
- For safe cutting and chopping, use cutting boards or designated cutting areas.
- Install knife holders on work tables to prevent worker injury.
- Keep knives sharpened and in good condition.
- Make sure you can always see both hands and all fingers and the cutting blades.
- Place a knife that you are handing to someone down on a clean surface and let the other person pick it up.
- Place a tag on any defective or unsafe equipment and immediately inform your supervisor.
- Report immediately to your supervisor if you think you have been stuck or cut.
- The meat slicer should be unplugged and the blade lowered (not exposed) when not in use.
- Turn off and unplug the machine before disassembling and cleaning.
- Use a broom and dustpan to clean up broken glass; do not use your hands.
- Use any machine guards provided.
- Use any personal protective equipment your employer provides, including special gloves for clean-up duties or cut-resistant gloves for slicing.
- Use pre-packaged or pre-cut stock when possible.
- Use the appropriate gloves and other personal protective equipment when cleaning.
- **When in doubt, always ask your supervisor.**

Should an employee cut themselves during work it is important that they immediately notify their supervisor or the manager on duty, regardless of severity, and ensure that proper medical attention is provided. Cuts that do not require the injured worker to seek medical attention should be properly cleaned and covered and it is important that the wound be cared for, cleaned regularly with dressings changed, until it has completely healed.