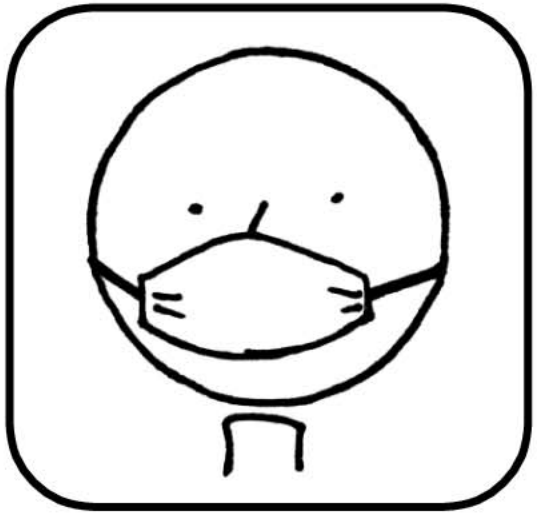
When you are at a clinic or hospital:

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue and dispose of the used tissue in the waste basket
- Clean your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner.



- You may also be asked to wear a mask to protect others.
- Don't worry if you see staff and other people wearing masks. They are preventing the spread of germs.

Washington State Department of Health

P.O. Box 47890
Olympia, WA 98504-7890

www.doh.wa.gov

Department of Health Consumer Hotline
1-800-525-0127

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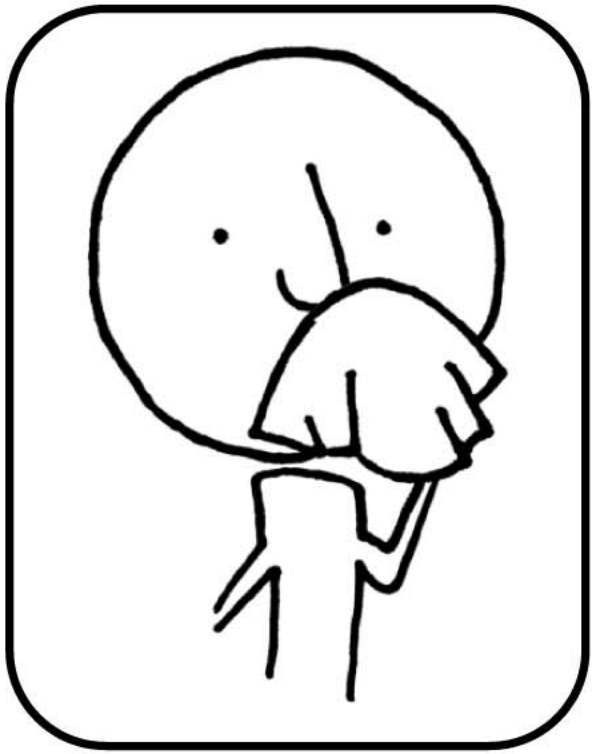
APIC
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology, Inc.

MINNESOTA MDH DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Stop the spread of germs that make you and others sick!

Cover your Cough



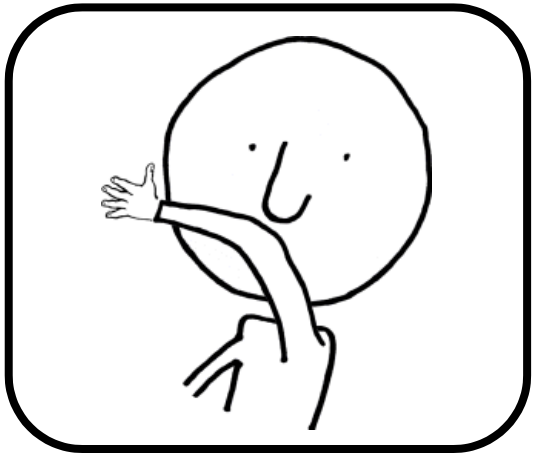
Washington State Department of Health

Why should I cover my cough?

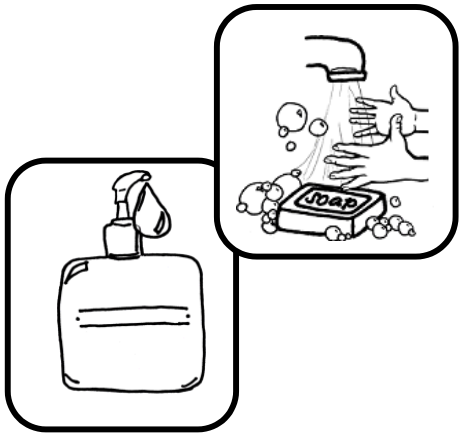
- Serious respiratory illnesses like influenza, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), whooping cough and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) are spread by:
    - Coughing or sneezing
    - Unclean hands
- These illnesses spread easily in crowded places where people are in close contact.

How do I stop the spread of germs if I'm sick?

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue every time you cough or sneeze. Throw the used tissue in a waste basket.
- If you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough into your sleeve.



- After coughing or sneezing, always clean your hands with soap & water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Do not share eating utensils, drinking glasses, towels or other personal items.

How can I stay healthy?

- Clean your hands often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick, if possible.
- Get vaccinated! Influenza (flu) and penumococcal (pneumonia) vaccines can prevent some serious respiratory illnesses.