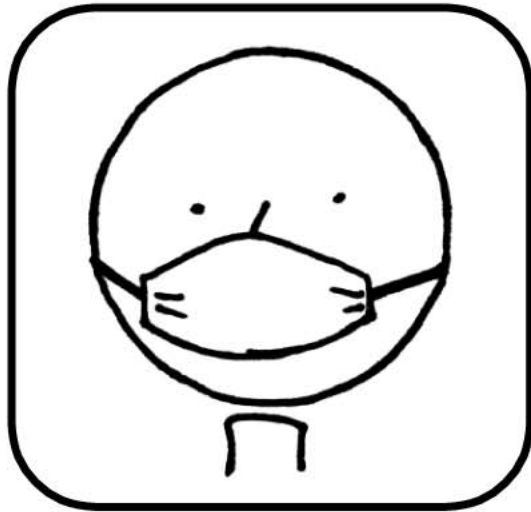# When you are at a clinic or hospital:

- 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
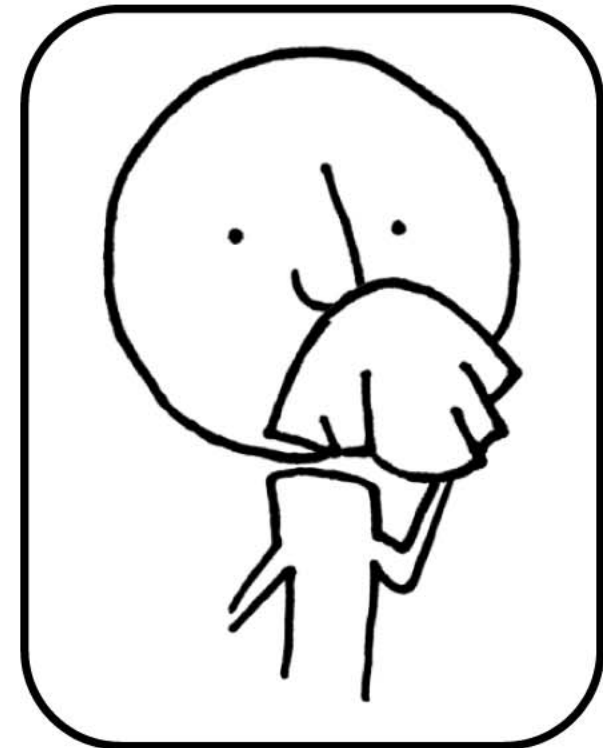Olympia, WA 98504-7890

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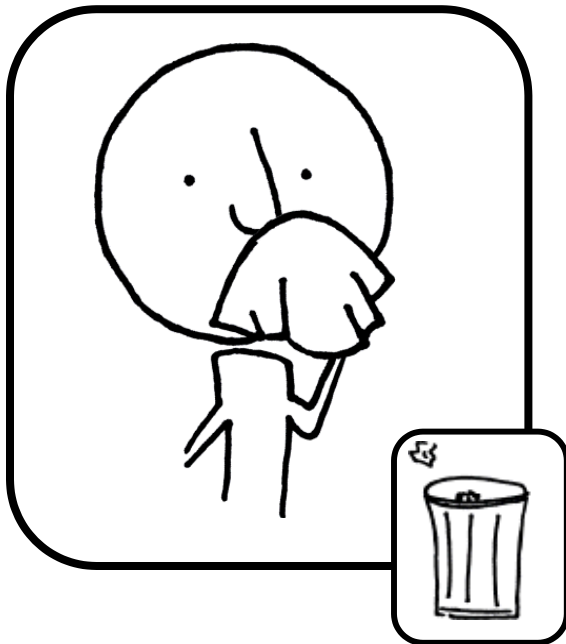
How do I stop the spread of germs if I'm sick?

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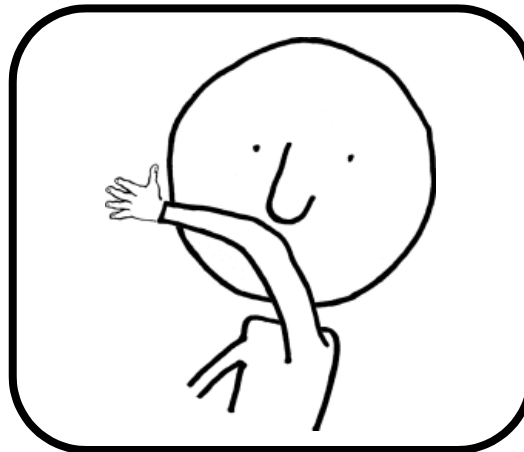
- After coughing or sneezing, always clean your hands with soap & water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Do not share eating utensils, drinking glasses, towels or other personal items.

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.