

Preventing the Spread of Germs



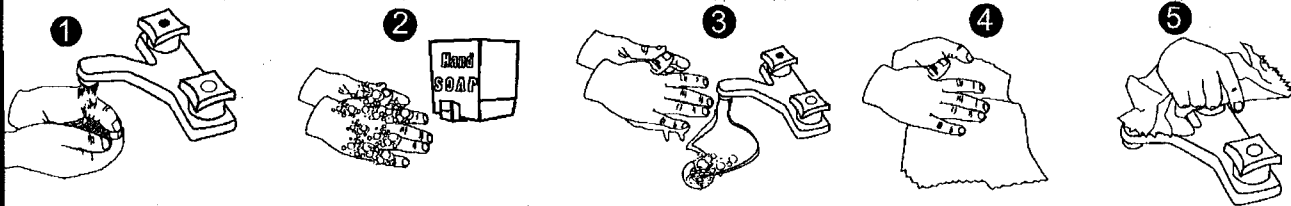
Colds, the flu, and other communicable diseases seem to go along with having children. It's upsetting and worrisome to hear your child say, "I don't feel good."

In our health lessons, your child has been learning about diseases that can be "caught." He or she has learned about germs and how they spread from one person to another. He or she also knows how to reduce the spread of germs.

- Cover sneezes or coughs with a tissue, or cough or sneeze into your elbow or sleeve.
- Wash your hands often.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Don't share food you have touched, eating utensils, cups, or personal care items with others.
- Have an adult clean any cuts or scrapes.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with your hands.

If your child does these six things, maybe you won't hear, "I don't feel good" as often. Let's work together to remind children of these health habits and reward them when they practice these habits.

G-E-R-M-S: Steps for Washing Away the Dirt and Germs



Here are the five steps to proper hand washing your child has learned. Try counting them off on your hand or spelling the word "germs" as your child follows each step.

five steps

Step One: **G**et your hands wet while the water is running.

Step Two: **E**nergetically, use soap and rub your hands together. Work up a good lather. Wash vigorously for 18 to 20 seconds. Be sure to wash wrists, back of hands, between fingers, and under fingernails. A good way to make sure you wash long enough is to count to 20 or hum a short song twice, such as *Row, Row, Row Your Boat* or *Happy Birthday*.

Step Three: **R**inse your hands and let the water drip into the sink.

Step Four: **M**ake sure you dry your hands with an individual towel or paper towel.

Step Five: **S**hut off the faucet handle with the used towel.

It's best to open the door of the bathroom with the used towel. Then, throw it away.