Sharps Safety

Why is recapping needles dangerous?
It is extremely dangerous to hold a needle in one hand and attempt to cover it with a small cap held in the other hand because the following might happen:
• The needle could miss the cap and stab the hand holding it.
• The needle could pierce the cap and stab the hand holding it.
• The poorly fitting cap could slip off a recapped needle and stab the hand holding it.

How to protect yourself from needle-stick injuries:
• Avoid the use of needles if safe and effective alternatives are available.
• Select, evaluate and use devices with safety features that reduce the risk of needlestick injury.
• Avoid recapping needles.
• Plan for safe handling and disposal of needles before using them.
• Put uncapped needles in a rigid tray during procedures.
• Promptly dispose of used needles in appropriate sharps-disposal containers.
• Report all needle-stick and sharps-related injuries promptly to ensure that you receive appropriate follow-up care.
• Substitute plasticware for glass when possible.
• Follow safety guidelines for all sharps hazards (razor blades, scalpels, slides).
• Participate in training.

Avoid Recapping
Do not recap needles for disposal whenever possible. If recapping is required for the procedure being done, you must use tongs, a recapping device or one-hand scoop method to recap the needle. Never recap needles using one hand to hold the cap and the other to hold the needle!

Needle Disposal
Always dispose of needles and other sharps in a rigid, puncture-resistant container immediately after use.

Recapping device
One-hand scoop
Rigid tray