



Trick or Treat Safety

How to Safely Enjoy the Halloween Holiday

What is the Problem?

On October 31st, Americans annually tour the streets of their neighborhoods for sweet candy confections. For many people, autumn events like Halloween are fun times to dress up in costumes, go trick-or-treating, attend parties, and eat yummy treats. These events are also opportunities to provide nutritious snacks, get physical activity, and focus on safety.¹



Who is at Risk?

Children and unattended youth are at highest risk for danger and high-risk behavior. It is important that young children should always be accompanied by an adult or an older, responsible child while trick-or-treating and proper precautions are taken to remain safe.²

Prevention Tips

Trick or Treating can be a fun family activity, but be sure to keep in mind the possible risks associated with health and wellness during this holiday.

- **Pedestrian Safety:** All children should walk, not run, from house to house and use the sidewalk if available, rather than walk in the street. Children should be cautioned against running out from between parked cars, or across lawns and yards where ornaments, furniture, or clotheslines present dangers.³
- **Treats:** Warn children not to eat any treats before an adult has carefully examined them for evidence of tampering.⁴

Center for Disease Control offers the helpful acronym S-A-F-E below⁵:

- S - Swords, knives, and similar costume accessories should be short, soft, and flexible.
- A - Avoid trick-or-treating alone. Walk in groups or with a trusted adult.
- F - Fasten reflective tape to costumes and bags to help drivers see you.
- E - Examine all treats for choking hazards and tampering before eating them. Limit the amount of treats you eat.



Plan of the Week (POW):

Knowing what safe ways to explore neighborhood surroundings will make for a happier Trick or Treating experience. **ALWAYS** remember young children should be accompanied by an adult or older child during Trick or Treat activities.⁶ Costumes should be flame retardant, form-fitted enough to move about with ease and prevent possible injury and bright or lit enough to be visible to motorists in dusk and dark evening hours.⁷ To prevent unfavorable events from occurring, **NEVER** approach a home that looks unwelcoming or without an adult for safety and security.⁸

References

- 1, 5 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Halloween Health and Safety Tips. <http://www.cdc.gov/family/halloween/> Last updated 29 October 2012. Accessed 25 August 2013.
- 2-4, 6-8 US Consumer Product and Safety Report, (2012). CPSC Safety Alert: Halloween safety. 100 009309. Retrieved from website: <http://www.cpsc.gov/PageFiles/121343/100.pdf>

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NMCPHC Injury Prevention and Violence Free Living Webpage

<http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcpHC/health-promotion/injury-violence-free-living/Pages/injury-violence-free-living.aspx>

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