



Have a Happy and Healthy Halloween

Many kids eat lots of junk food at Halloween time and when they are trick-or-treating. However you can make sure they have a good time and still don't eat too much sugar!

1. **Feed them first.** Make sure your kids eat a nutritious dinner before trick-or-treating so they won't be starving while they're out and when they get home. This will help naturally limit how many sweets they eat. If they're really excited about the night's festivities, they may not be in the mood to sit down for a very nutritious meal like chicken and broccoli, so think about treating them to one of their favorites instead.
2. **Ration.** Limit the number of homes or places your children visit while trick-or-treating to cut down on the amount of sweets they get.
3. **Limit the loot.** Decide before trick-or-treating how many goodies your kids will eat that evening and each day after. Limit how many pieces of candy per day they will be allowed to choose. (2 is a good number, if they're small). Also, set a date for how long you will keep the candy around. A couple weeks is long enough. There is no reason children need to eat ALL the candy they've collected. A charity, such as your local food bank would probably love your donation of extra Halloween candy.
4. **Start a new trend.** If you know children will be coming around to your house, consider giving them something different. Kids love pencils, whistles, yo-yos, stickers, etc. All these items are inexpensive...and if you don't end up giving them all out, they will keep until next year. (Unlike the candy, which we end up eating if we have leftovers).
5. **Make a trade.** Offer to buy your child's bag of candy or offer them a trade. For example, if they give up the bag of candy, they get a trip to their favorite water or amusement park, or maybe they get to buy a game, movie or toy they want.



Healthy Halloween Tricks & Treats

Imagine sitting down to eat a five-pound bag of sugar! That's what your kids will do on Halloween if you let them. While all foods can be part of a healthy diet—even candy, the recommendation is to eat it *sparingly*.



1. Don't buy Halloween candy to give to trick-or-treaters any earlier than you have to. Having the candy in the house is too tempting. Buy candy that you don't like, so you will be less tempted to nibble on it.
2. Give your child a nutritious meal *before* he goes trick-or-treating. This will fill him up and make it less likely that he'll be eating the candy before he gets home.
3. Limit the number of houses your child visits for trick-or-treating to cut down on the amount of goodies they get.
4. Let your child indulge a bit. Not allowing your child to eat her Halloween candy will just drive her to want it more. Although a healthy diet is important for children, allowing the *occasional* treat, especially on a fun-oriented holiday like Halloween, is okay.
5. Focus on portion control. Set limits on how much candy can be eaten at once. When your child gets home let him choose 5 or 6 pieces he wants to eat, take the rest of the candy and allow your child to pick approximately 2-3 pieces each day as a treat or in their lunch. Keep it out of sight...chances are it will stay out of mind.
6. Negotiate a deadline with your kids for how long the candy will remain in the house. Once the deadline arrives, out goes the extra candy. (One week is plenty long enough).
7. Offer to swap candy and treats for some other prize or reward. For example, offer them a trip to an amusement park, movie or fun event they want to go to.
8. Have your child brush and floss his teeth thoroughly before going to bed. Although this should be done every night, it's especially important that your child's teeth be free of the Halloween sugar.
9. Donate your leftover candy to charity or a local homeless shelter. Not only will this prevent your child from continuing to eat candy for months to come, it will help teach her the value of helping others.
10. Find alternatives to trick-or-treating. Many communities have haunted houses, or community centers that offer activities for children other than trick-or-treating. Find out what's going on in your community.