

# A Very Scary Story



Last year, like many moms, I rushed home from work to take my kids trick-or-treating. It was getting dark, and we only had an hour before dinner, but the girls were beyond excited. Pumpkin pails in hand, we joined the dozens of other kids in the neighborhood. It was a fun time, with lots of giggles and frights, and when I tucked the girls in that night, we declared it a very good Halloween.

And then I went downstairs, dumped out their candy, and **freaked out**.

Like most moms, I try to limit my kids' intake of the sweet stuff, but now I was faced with a candy mountain. I counted every piece: there were 213. I got even more obsessed and wrote down all the brands, and the next day I took my list into work to run some stats.

Can you believe those 213 pieces of candy contained almost **21,000 calories** and **735 grams of fat**? And do you know that if you fed a starving child just 1,500 calories a day from my daughter's pile, you'd keep him alive for two weeks?

I'm not trying to take the fun out of Halloween, I'm just trying to put things in perspective. Maybe this year we can spend a little less on candy and put a little more into a charity's fund. Or maybe, in the age of rampant obesity, we could find a few alternatives to candy. (Such as handing out small toys or pencils).

So what did I do with the candy?

I took it to the office and tempted my poor coworkers.

As for my two daughters, they got to pick out ten pieces of candy each, and they agreed to trade the other 193 for a toy.

**Happy Halloween.**



# 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.



