

Halloween Candy Everywhere!

By

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Kids get so excited to see how much candy they can haul back from trick-or-treating, the office abounds with candies on what seems like every person's desk you visit, stores stock the shelves each holiday earlier than ever. Here are some tips to navigate Halloween more healthfully:

- 🎃 **Sit down and ask the kids to filter through what they *really* like and what they don't**
We often eat what's there because it's there, not because we love it so much. Have them pick their favorite 2 that they can have a little more than others. If they are luke-warm about a type of candy, toss it or give it away. They may be inclined to say they love it all, so make a game out of ranking the candies in order of their favorites each year to show the importance of not wasting calories and tooth decay on foods they don't absolutely love.
- 🎃 **Freeze some of the chocolate candy for later**
This also keeps the candies out of sight, which may reduce how often they ask for it. In fact, keep all candy out of sight and out of mind. Keeping it on a counter where you can grab some every time you walk by can easily increase your calories by 200—1000 calories per day. Just this grazing could easily lead to a 1-2 pound gain over a week. Be mindful of how much you eat. Keep the wrappers out after you eat the candies one day and see if you aren't surprised that it's more than you intended to eat.
- 🎃 **Set a number they can eat each day to prevent overeating at one sitting.**
Have them choose 5-10 pieces and encourage them to slow down and savor them—make a game out of seeing how long they can make their 5-10 pieces last in their mouth. Ask them how stuffed they are and stop them when they reach 7 on a 10-point scale. Eat candies after a meal to reduce the impact on blood sugar, insulin, and behavior. This helps avoid spikes and crashes.
- 🎃 **Offer something healthy too, so they see the balance**
It's important to set kids' expectations and be consistent. Adults often remember what their parents served when they were growing up. Keep this lasting memory a healthy one with at least one fruit and one vegetable at lunch and dinner, ready-to-snack-on fruits and veggies available at any time, and some fun desserts or holiday candy sprinkled in for fun. They'll remember them more if they are a *real treat* and not an everyday occurrence. It's no longer a treat if it happens every day...it becomes an

expectation—and one that’s hard to break.

🍊 **Offer trick-or-treaters alternatives to candy**

Mix in some party favors and small toys (yo-yos, flying disks, spider rings, plastic fang teeth, bubbles, stickers, monster finger puppets, etc.) along with your candy, so one-third to one-half of what you give isn’t candy at all but rather something they can enjoy for even longer.

🍊 **Be a good role model**

Kids pick up on the “do as I say, not as I do” very quickly. Using some of these same tips yourself as candy abounds around Halloween can be helpful to your kids and grandkids. Pick the one candy it wouldn’t be Halloween without and have a small portion of it and be done. Show your kids the thought process of how you are allowing yourself to have it in a controlled portion just one or two times and by choosing something you absolutely love to show them that you are prioritizing.

🍊 **Have a healthy, happy, and safe Halloween!**

Bring your kids to the pumpkin patch (on Industrial Street in Denton) at the Day of the Dead Festival on the morning of October 25th for interactive games and prizes.

Learn more tips to help you eat better, move more, and stress less at www.lovetolivewell.com. Sign up for more information on Love to LiveWell’s online challenges and courses to be entered in a drawing for a free Tune Up & Go (nutrition screening, body composition analysis, & health coaching session) (valued at \$75).

