

## Halloween Health Tips:

1. It's not worth dying for- watch out for cars
2. Beauty (and monstrosity) is more than skin-deep. Watch what you put onto your skin.
3. For dental health, gorge on the candy, don't nibble it.

## Real horror of Halloween: Pedestrian deaths -By [Liz Szabo](#), USA TODAY

Kids face real dangers on [Halloween](#) night, but not from ghosts.

Children are more than twice as likely to be killed by a car while walking on Halloween than any other night of the year, according to Safe Kids USA. More than 540 kids under age 14 are killed in pedestrian accidents each year. In an analysis of deaths from 2002 to 2006, the group found an average of 2.2 children are killed in pedestrian accidents from 4 to 10 p.m. on Halloween, compared with one child every other evening at the same time.

"Halloween is consistently the most dangerous day of the year for kids to walk," says Safe Kids spokeswoman Kate Jones. Kids are at greater risk on Halloween simply because they're more likely to be walking after dark, sometimes without their parents around, says Moira Donahue, SafeKids' director of pedestrian safety. Masks can make it hard for youngsters to see around corners, and dark costumes can make it hard for drivers to spot them.

Today's suburbs, many of which lack sidewalks and crosswalks, also aren't very pedestrian-friendly, she says. And many rush-hour drivers are no longer used to seeing pedestrians — especially tiny ones, Donahue says. "We need to get the message out to drivers," Donahue says. "On Halloween, slow down, turn your lights on and be prepared that there are going to be more kids out. They don't behave like other people commuting from work." Unlike adults, children are more likely to dart out between cars, Donahue says. That makes it more important than ever for drivers to avoid distractions, such as cellphones, she says.

## Halloween face paint can have a scary side - By [Elizabeth Weise](#), USA TODAY

Any goblin or ghoulie worth its salt knows Halloween isn't Halloween without a bright green face or a few artful drops of blood somewhere or other. That makes safety experts happy: They've long encouraged parents to favor face paints over masks because masks can make it hard for children to see while trick-or-treating. But a recall of a face paint in May that gave some Girl Scouts rashes is one of the reasons the Food and Drug Administration is warning parents to be careful that the paints don't cause problems of their own this Halloween.

"Most of these products are completely safe, but there have been reports of adverse events and allergic reactions," says Linda Katz, director of the FDA's Office of Cosmetics and Color. Under the law, the FDA doesn't have the authority to regulate cosmetics and face paints before they go to market, though it does regulate the colors used in them. And when there are problems, the FDA also can't recall them; it can only ask the manufacturer or distributor to do so. Thankfully, Katz says, most do so when alerted by the agency. That's what happened in the case of a Girl Scout event in Ohio in February, when 43 girls got red, bumpy rashes from face paint made by Shanghai Color Art Stationery Co. Ltd. A problem with a group of Boy Scouts also came to light in 2005.

Parents seldom think to alert the FDA when their child gets a rash that might be linked to face paint, Katz says. The Scout incidents involved enough children that public health officials got the word out. That's why the FDA is asking parents to report any problems with face paint this Halloween to its "adverse event" hotline at 800-332-1088. The FDA's advice:

- Don't use anything on the face that isn't intended for skin.
- If face paint has a bad smell, it could be a sign of contamination or bacteria. Throw it away.
- Some face paints have pictures showing people wearing them near their eyes even though the labels say "not for use near eyes." Believe the label, not the picture.
- Try a dab of the face paint on an arm a few days before wearing to check for allergic reactions.
- Check to make sure any colors in the face paint are FDA-approved by looking at the Summary of Color Additives on the FDA's website. If there's a color in your makeup that isn't on the list, don't use it. (Ms. Stockton says, "Check out the **Skin Deep** website as well.)
- Be careful with fluorescent ("neon" or "day-glow") and luminescent ("glow-in-the-dark") colors. None of them are for use near the eyes.
- Don't sleep with face paint on; wearing it too long may irritate the skin or cause it to flake off and get in the eyes. One thing Katz says the FDA doesn't really worry about is kids eating face paints: "There's enough candy around."

Compiled from **Halloween candy: It's not how much kids eat, but how often** -By Randy Dotinga, HealthDay and **How to deal with the Halloween candy influx** - By Marilyn Linton, [Edmonton Sun](#)

Halloween and its avalanche of candy are here, making it the worst time of year for children's teeth, right? Not necessarily, says a dentist who contends that parents can make a big difference by monitoring when their kids eat their sweets. "Parents need to know that frequency is far more important than amount when it comes to taking in" sugars, said Dr. Mark Helpin, acting chairman of Temple University's Department of Pediatric Dentistry. "It's not how much we eat, but how often we eat these kinds of things that will place us at increased risk of dental decay and cavities." Candy remains a huge part of Halloween for tens of millions of American kids and their candy-buying — or candy-pilfering — parents. The National Confectioners Association says 93% of children in the United States go trick-or-treating, and the group estimates that Halloween candy sales this year will top \$2.26 billion. A few years ago, the Center for Children's Health Media, sponsored by the U.S.-based Nemours Foundation, polled 1,200 kids about their Halloween candy. Most kids said they get at least 50 pieces of candy on the big night, with over 44% saying they take in more than 100 pieces.

But children — and adults — are less at risk of developing tooth decay if they eat sweets — or even carbohydrate-heavy foods like potato chips and crackers — at mealtimes, Helpin said. Candy contributes to tooth decay because its sugar mixes with the bacteria in the dental plaque on teeth to create a mild acid which, in turn, attacks the hard outer layer of the tooth, called the enamel. Cavities are most likely to develop when your mouth is exposed to the acid created by bacteria during eating, Helpin said. "When we eat (at meals), the flow of saliva increases. We're also taking in other liquids that will help wash the mouth out," he said. But if you snack during the day, the teeth are continuously bathed in acid, he said. "If I have four pieces of candy, and I eat all four at one time, my mouth will have acid in it for 30 to 60 minutes. If I eat one each hour, my mouth can be exposed to acid for four hours," he added. The longer and more often sugar touches your teeth, the more damage it can do," says Swan. "If the dental plaque isn't removed every day by brushing and flossing, over time, the enamel gets soft and a cavity forms."

Some sweets are better than others. "Candy that is particularly bad for teeth is soft and sticky," explains Swan. "It will get stuck on and between the teeth, making it difficult to either be washed away by saliva or cleaned away by a toothbrush." Think gummi worms, caramels and that often stale standby, Halloween kiss candy.

So what should you do? The worst time to give kids sweets is right before bedtime, Helpin said. As for mealtimes — like lunchtime at school — it's wise for children to swish a liquid in their mouths to wash away acid, he said.

When it comes to Halloween, Helpin recommends that parents not get overly concerned about candy and their kids. "I don't think Halloween week is going to be the make-or-break factor in whether someone will get a number of new cavities," he said. Helpin recommends that parents have their kids brush their teeth after eating candy. If that's not possible, have them rinse their mouth with water three or four times after eating. This will help cut down on acidity in the mouth, he said.

There can be special concerns about Halloween treats if your child is among the 3 million American boys and girls with food allergies. "Candy products frequently include ingredients like peanuts, tree nuts, milk and egg, some of the most common food allergens in children," Dr. Jacqueline A. Pongracic, an official with the Milwaukee-based American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology, said in a news release issued by the organization. "Peanuts and tree nuts are common causes of severe, life-threatening reactions, and children and their parents need to be aware of this and check ingredients for all treats. This can be especially tricky with Halloween candies, which often do not have ingredients listed on their labels."

Alternatives to candy gorging:

- One alternative to the many body-damaging effects that candy brings is to convince your parents to make a trade with you. Volunteer to trade in your candy for something you have been wanting, like a book, a video game, toy or trip to the movies...
- A second is to locate the dentists in your area that purchase candy from kids. Sell the candy; make a profit!
- Describe three actions you will take to keep yourself safer and healthier this Halloween ...