

Hauntingly Creative Tips

for

Halloween Parties & Trick-or-Treating

We wouldn't be that concerned about candy if it were only at Halloween

But candy (in its many forms!!) has become an all too familiar and frequent treat—*breakfast candy* (sugary cereals), *liquid candy* (soda), and *fruit candies* at lunch (fruit snacks/gummies & roll-ups).

Although Halloween is often centered on sweets and candy, there's more to Halloween than trick-or-treating; there's dressing up, having fun with friends, playing games, and doing crafts. Plus, celebrating Halloween healthfully doesn't have to mean giving up all the treats. With so many festivities throughout the year, it's important to enjoy each occasion without going overboard. CSPI created this guide to help you celebrate Junk Food Day (also known as Halloween) while keeping health and balance in mind.

Creative Halloween Party Ideas

Savor the flavor. At parties, serve no more than one sugary/higher-fat item. Provide healthier party snacks and non-food goodies (see listed suggestions).

BOOgy down! Instead of *sit-down & eat* parties, get up and get moving with the following activities: ghost sack races, costume parades, pin the nose on the witch, and bobbing for apples (game that includes a healthy snack too!).

Keep them spellbound. Shift children's focus away from candy by: reading & writing scary Halloween stories, arts & crafts such as making masks out of paper plates or bats out of egg cartons, acting out short plays, running a haunted house for other classes, and learning about Halloween's history.

Make good food look *ghoulishly* delicious! Use Halloween-themed cookie cutters to make sandwiches or fruit more interesting. Decorate the room, serve food with creepy plates, napkins, cups, or straws, and design and fill treat bags with healthier snack foods.



Healthier Party Snacks

- Water or 100% juice boxes
- Apple cider
- Apples (w/caramel or yogurt dip)
- Carrot sticks & low-fat dip
- Dried fruit (apricots, raisins, craisins)
- Grapes
- Oranges cut into wedges
- Light or low-fat popcorn
- Whole wheat Fig Newtons
- Pumpkin dip & graham crackers (see recipe)
- Pumpkin muffins (see recipe)
- Roasted pumpkin seeds
- 100% fruit leathers or roll ups
- Homemade granola bars (see recipe)
- Trail Mix (labeled as "Goblin Food")
- Snack cups of canned peaches or mandarin oranges in 100% juice

Take the time to encourage healthy eating with children throughout the year, instead of battling over it during the Halloween season.

PUMPKIN MUFFINS

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Sift together:

1¾ cups whole wheat pastry flour (or half whole wheat and half all purpose flour)

¾ teaspoon salt

½ cup sugar

2 teaspoons baking powder

1 teaspoon cinnamon

½ teaspoon nutmeg

Beat in a separate bowl:

2 eggs

Add to the eggs:

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

¾ cup low-fat milk

1 cup canned pumpkin

Combine the wet and dry ingredients with a few swift strokes (don't over mix).

Fill greased muffin cups two-thirds of the way full and bake for 20 to 25 minutes.

Makes a dozen muffins.

Recipe makes: 12 muffins (1 muffin per serving)
Calories 127 · Total Sugar 10 g · Fat 3.6 g ·
Saturated Fat 0.6 g · Sodium 220 mg ·
Calcium 52 mg

PUMPKIN DIP

(from the Dannon Institute)

Mix the following ingredients: 3

tablespoons canned pumpkin 1 cup low-fat vanilla yogurt 1 tablespoon orange

juice concentrate (use 100% juice for

more nutrients) ½ tsp of cinnamon

(optional) 1 tbsp maple syrup (optional)

Dip in with graham crackers.

Recipe makes: 3 servings
(approx. 1/3 cup per serving)
Calories 72 · Total Sugar 9.5 g · Fat 1.1 g ·
Saturated Fat 0.7 g · Sodium 55 mg ·
Calcium 131 mg

GRANOLA BARS

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Mix together:

2 cups rolled oats

¾ cup packed brown sugar

½ cup wheat germ

¾ teaspoon ground cinnamon

1 cup whole wheat pastry flour

¾ cup raisins or cranberries (optional)

Make a well in the center, and pour in:

½ cup honey

1 egg, beaten

½ cup vegetable oil

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Mix well using hands. Pat mixture evenly into the greased 9x13-inch baking pan.

Bake for 30 to 35 minutes in the preheated oven, until bars turn golden at the edges. Cool for 5 minutes, then cut into bars while still warm. Do not allow the bars to cool completely before cutting, or they will be too hard to cut.

Recipe makes: 24 bars
Calories 156 · Total Sugar 16 g · Fat 5.6 g ·
Saturated Fat 0.6 g · Sodium 66 mg · Calcium 16 mg

Healthier Trick-or-Treating Giveaways

For non-food Halloween treats, try small toys like:

- Temporary tattoos or stickers
- Small plastic spiders, ghosts, or skeletons
- Super bouncy balls
- Halloween-themed pencils, erasers, or pencil toppers
- Spooky plastic rings or false teeth
- Bracelets or hair accessories
- Halloween cookie cutters
- Coloring books and crayons with Halloween themes

For food treats, try:

- Individual packages of raisins or other dried fruit
- 100% juice boxes
- Trail mix (also known as "Goblin Food")

For candy, if you must, try:

- Sugar-free gum
- Fat-free candy like fruit snacks/gummies, *SweetTarts*, *Smarties*, *Twizzlers*, or *Skittles*
- Lower-fat chocolate candies like *York Peppermint Patties*, *3 Musketeers*, or *Junior Mints*
- Giving out the smallest size of the candy (the smaller the bar/package, the lower the fat & calories)
- 100% fruit leathers or roll ups



On Halloween Night:

- Make sure children eat a healthy meal before they go trick-or-treating so that candy is a dessert, not supper.
- Remember Halloween safety:
 - Make sure children travel in groups and/or with an adult.
 - Give children flashlights for added visibility.
 - Accessorize with glow-in-the-dark necklaces or bracelets or use reflective tape.
 - If children are walking far distances during trick-or-treating, make sure they are wearing proper and supportive footwear.
- For food safety concerns, check collected items
- before allowing children to eat them, discarding of any pre-opened goodies.

A useful strategy is to allow your children to eat what they want on Halloween night and let them choose 5 special treats to eat over the next 5 days. As for the rest of it, dispose of it or put it out of sight.

For more information about healthy eating, visit www.cspinet.org