



Public Health

Idaho North Central District

Nez Perce County
215 10th Street
Lewiston, ID 83501
(208) 799-3100
Fax (208) 799-0349

Latah County
333 E Palouse River Drive
Moscow, ID 83843
(208) 882-7506
Fax (208) 882-3494

Clearwater County
105 115th Street
Orofino, ID 83544
(208) 476-7850
Fax (208) 476-7494

Idaho County
903 West Main
Grangeville, ID 83530
(208) 983-2842
Fax (208) 983-2845

Lewis County
132 N Hill Street
P O Box 277
Kamiah, ID 83536
(208) 935-2124
Fax (208) 935-0223

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Tara Biesecker
Public Information Officer

PHONE: (208) 799-3100

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HEADLINE: Have a Healthy Halloween

LEWISTON, IDAHO - Public Health – Idaho North Central District is part of a district wide collaborative effort to combat obesity. As part of that effort we are challenging residents and businesses to have a Healthy Halloween. Halloween is one day, yet it offers a platform for us to focus attention not just on this holiday, but on how we can make better food choices all year. So it's not just about one day, but about changing a lifetime one step and one holiday at a time.

Halloween has many traditions that go back generations, but it is important to maintain healthy habits. As a community, consider alternate options to sweets and as parents consider limiting the amount of candy you allow your children to consume. Children take cues from adults; if parents are excited about new traditions their children will be as well.

An average Jack-O-Lantern bucket carries about 250 pieces of candy amounting to about 9,000 calories and about three pounds of sugar. In some cases, kids don't take home just one bucket of candy on Halloween night. They bring in pillow cases of sweets, many of which are eaten that night. Below are tips to help make the tradition of Halloween a healthier one:

- Make sure children eat a healthy meal or snack before trick or treating.
- Check treats and keep only the treats that are in their original wrappers.
- Try to ration the amount of Halloween candy a child eats at one time.
- Freeze the chocolate bars to save them for later.
- Trade candy for small trinkets (toys, movies, etc.).
- Make tooth brushing fun.
- Consider purchasing non-food treats for those who visit your home.

Some alternatives to traditional treats that are less than a \$1 per dozen: Play dough, pencils/erasers, sugarless gum, stickers, temporary tattoos, glow bracelets, toothbrushes or bubbles. These are just inexpensive ways to keep Halloween trick-or-treaters healthy and happy.

Whatever your choice is for trick-or-treat, remember the key is everything in moderation so that a Healthy Halloween can be enjoyed by all.

For more health and safety tips, visit www.cdc.gov/family/halloween/index.htm. For a list of alternatives to candy, visit http://healthyshasta.org/downloads/eathealthy/classparties/Healthy_Halloween_Treats.pdf.