

Halloween Health Dos and Don'ts

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Halloween season is here and with it comes candy and other tempting treats. Arizona Foothills got the scoop from certified nutritionist at Rejuvena Health and Aesthetics, Judy Nicassio, so we can all be cautious and know what to avoid this year and what proactive measures we can take.



Mealtime Musts: Halloween kick starts the whole holiday season, so it is very important to start out strong. When possible, stick to your good habits and try to maintain your normal routine. Be sure that you are eating good quality meals that contain an appropriate amount of protein, because this will help regulate your blood sugar. Fitting in exercise can seem impossible at times, but it will really benefit you if you do. There will be lots of splurging at holiday events, so it is important to fit in some exercise to make up for all those treats. Also, mindful eating is extremely important when it comes to meals. Make sure you are sitting down and truly thinking about what you're eating. Watching television while eating can be a distraction and take away from your mindful eating practices. Also leave time for meals so you are not rushing and just scarfing everything down without thinking or even enjoying your meal.

Candy: When it comes to candy, Nicassio's recommendation is to try to avoid it as much as possible. Not only is sugar empty calories, but it is also inflammatory. In most sweet treats, there is high fructose corn syrup and this is not something you want to be putting in your system. Cavities among children have increased for the first time in four years. In one Halloween night, you can rack up to 7,000 calories in candy alone. These are serious issues and need to be considered, even though you want your children to have a good time.

Treating Alternatives: First option for a healthier Halloween would be giving away goodie bags with non-edible items. You can get a great selection of these goodies at Amazon or Party City. You can stuff these bags with novelty items like plastic eyeballs, comic books, or even Halloween nail art. You can get creative with this one and have a specified bag for boys and girls. If you make the choice and go with goodie bags this year, this also takes the temptation away from parents as well. Instead of leftover candy this year, you will only have spare toys and that you can keep for your kids or donate.

Healthier Eats: Another way to make this Halloween a little better is to offer healthier candy options for kids. These are considered the lesser of two evils, but still taste incredible. A great alternative to hand out to children and sneak for yourself are Justins Dark Chocolate Peanut Butter Cups. They're rich in flavor, but do not contain any trans fat. They are also a great option for anyone because they are vegan, organic, gluten-free, and dairy free. When it comes to hard candy, Torie and Howard make a great alternative. Their hard candies do not contain any artificial ingredients or artificial dyes so you don't have to worry about that at all. Lastly, if your choice is chewy candy, then try Surf Treats. These gummy, delectable, treats are organic, vegan, corn syrup free, and gluten-free. They have an amazing taste so you won't even be able to tell that they are the healthier option.

Eliminate Temptation: If you really feel compelled to buy candy for the trick-or-treaters you can always choose an option that you do not care for so you don't feel the overwhelming temptation in the house. Another great idea is to leave the bag of candy unopened until the kids come knocking at the door on Halloween night. Leaving the bag unopened eliminates the temptation prior to the big night and when it's opened you can just make sure you hand out the whole bag so there is none left to carry over into the following week.

It is easy to see that this Halloween can still be a fun one, but with a healthy twist. You might think it's hard to follow these new rules, but once they are enforced for you and the kids you can cash in on all the positive benefits. Now there are so many fun and healthy alternatives that we can partake it can be an easy choice for all.