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Safety Tips for a Happy Halloween

Using caution will make Halloween a safe and fun day for all trick-or-treaters.

Fall Back



Sunday, October 31 at 2 a.m. marks the

end of [Daylight Saving Time](#). Don't forget to set your clock back one hour on Saturday night before going to bed.



OCTOBER 28, 2004 -- Halloween is an exciting, fun-filled time for young people. Unfortunately, it can also be a time when accidents happen, and for potential criminal activity. By follow the safety tips below, adults can help make Halloween a safe and fun day for

all trick-or-treaters.

COSTUME SAFETY

- Costumes should be nonflammable, warm, and an appropriate length so the child doesn't trip or fall.
- Masks should fit properly and have large eyeholes so the child can see and breathe easily.
- Look for non-toxic designations when choosing face paint or makeup. They can be a safe, creative alternative to masks. Other products may contain emollient laxatives, talc or hydrocarbons, which can cause problems.
- If any makeup is swallowed, call the Poison Center for treatment instructions. Home food colorings are not recommended because they can tint the face and hair.
- Add reflective, adhesive-backed stickers on costumes so that motorists can see children more easily.
- Glow sticks and necklaces are popular to help illuminate at night during Halloween. In small amounts, it is very safe. The sticks and necklaces

This weekend is also the perfect time to change the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, and test them to ensure that they work properly.

Candy Caution

If you encounter a case of tainted candy, contact the Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center:

Poison Control Center

1-800-222-1222

[Web site](#)

Information the Poison Center Specialist Will Need:

- AGE and WEIGHT of the person.
- WHAT was ingested. Make sure you have the bottle or container with you.
- HOW MUCH was taken. This will help the Poison Center Specialist determine the severity of the incident.
- HOW the victim is feeling or acting right now.
- Your NAME and PHONE number.

occasionally break or children chew them open. If the contents get on the skin or in the eyes, it can cause irritation and a rash. Oral ingestion can cause nausea and burning. If ingested, call the Poison Center.

BEFORE YOU GO OUT

- Feed your children before taking them out to reduce the urge to snack on the route.
- Take a little bag of your own candy to give your children so they won't be tempted to eat from their bags before the treats can be checked.
- Secure emergency identification (name, address and phone number) discreetly within Halloween attire or on a bracelet.
- Teach children their home phone number and to how call 9-1-1 if they have an emergency or become lost. Remind them that 9-1-1 can be dialed free from any phone.
- If older children go out unattended, agree on a specific time when they must return home.

FOR HOMEOWNERS STAYING IN

- Welcome trick-or-treaters with your porch lights and any exterior lights on.
- Do not give out homemade or unwrapped treats.
- Consider giving non-edible treats such as stickers, pencil sharpeners, small toys, magnets, mini-erasers, shiny coins or a Polaroid of the trick-or-treaters.
- Make sure your yard is clear of such things as ladders, hoses, dog leashes and flowerpots that can trip the young ones.
- Battery powered jack-o-lantern candles are preferable to a real flame.

Related Links

- [Halloween Safety Tips - English](#) (125K PDF)
- [Halloween Safety Tips - Español](#) (105K PDF)
- [Denver Police](#)
- [Denver Fire Department](#)

- [Denver Health Medical Center](#)
- [Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center](#)
- [Denver Animal Control](#)
- [ASPCA](#)

If you have a lost animal, or if you suspect animal cruelty, contact the Denver Animal Control at:

Denver Animal Control

678 South Jason Street
 Denver, CO 80223
 Phone: 303-698-0076
 Abuse: 303-698-0080

Web site



- If you do use candles, keep jack-o-lanterns far away from drapes, decorations, flammable materials or areas where children and pets will be standing or walking.
- Make sure paper or cloth yard decorations won't be blown into a flaming candle.
- Healthy food alternatives for trick-or-treaters include packages of low-fat crackers with cheese or peanut butter filling, single-serve boxes of cereal, packaged fruit rolls and single-serve packets of low-fat microwave popcorn.
- At parties, dry ice can be used in punch bowls, but should not be used in individual glasses. Dry ice should be wrapped in cheesecloth before placing it into the bowl. If swallowed, oral burns may occur. Direct contact with the skin can cause a frostbite type injury. Wash skin immediately with lukewarm water.

WHILE YOU'RE OUT AND ABOUT

- Young children should always be accompanied by an adult.
- If you have small children, go out before dark.
- Trick-or-treat only in familiar areas. Remain on well-lit streets and always use the sidewalk. If no sidewalk is available, walk at the farthest edge of the roadway facing traffic.
- Don't assume the right of way. Motorists may not see trick-or-treaters. Just because one car stops, it doesn't mean that others will.
- Stay in a group, walk slowly and communicate where you are going.
- Never enter a stranger's home or car for a treat.
- Obey all traffic and pedestrian regulations.
- Do not take short cuts through backyards, alleys, or parks.

- Remember to carry a flashlight, and wear flame-retardant, reflective clothing. Put reflective tape on trick or treat bags.
- Older children and escorts should wear a wristwatch, and carry coins for non-emergency phone calls.
- Look carefully before crossing neighborhood streets. For high traffic areas, use the crosswalk. Don't jaywalk!
- Avoid unleashed dogs or other animals.
- Call the Denver Police/Fire/Paramedics Communications Center at 720-913-2000 to report any non-life-threatening suspicious or unlawful activities.

AFTER YOU RETURN HOME

- Carefully check all candy before allowing children to eat it
- Eat only those treats still in their original unopened wrappers.
- Throw away candies if wrappers are faded, have holes or tears or signs of re-wrapping.
- Throw away all unwrapped candy.
- Check fruit and homemade treats for punctures or foreign bodies that may have been injected, such as pins, metal needles or razor blades. Allow your child to eat such items only if from someone you know and trust. Most treat providers are well intentioned, but it's not worth the risk.
- Try to apportion treats for the days following Halloween.
- Report any instance of tainted candy to the Poison Center.

WHEN IN DOUBT...THROW IT OUT!

The American Association of Poison Control Centers discourages depending on x-rays to determine the safety of treats. They may contribute to a false sense of security, as they do not rule out contamination and are not substitutes for careful visual examination by parents.

If you or your children have been exposed to hazards, contact your doctor or an emergency hospital immediately. The Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center can be reached at 1-800-222-1222.

PET SAFETY

Halloween can be a very stressful and dangerous occasion for family pets. The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) offers pet owners some common sense tips to help them keep their pets safe.

- Don't leave your pet out in the yard on Halloween. There are plenty of stories of vicious pranksters who have teased, injured, stolen and even killed pets on this night.
- Walk your dog early on Halloween night and hold the leash firmly. Shrieking children can overwhelm dogs.
- Keep your outdoor cats inside several days before and several days after Halloween. Black cats in particular may be at risk from children's pranks or other cruelty-related incidents. Many shelters do not adopt out black cats on Halloween as a safety precaution.
- Trick-or-treat candies are not for pets. Chocolate is poisonous to many animals, and tin foil and cellophane candy wrappers can be hazardous if swallowed.
- Be careful of pets around a lit pumpkin. Pets may knock it over and cause a fire. Curious kittens especially run the risk of getting burned.
- Don't dress the dog or cat in costume unless you know he or she loves it. Otherwise, it puts too much stress on the animal.
- If you do dress up your pet, make sure the costume isn't annoying or unsafe. It should not constrict the animal's movement, hearing or ability to breathe or bark. Also, there should not be small, dangling, or easily chewed-off pieces on the costume that your pet could choke on.

- Be careful not to obstruct your pet's vision. Even the sweetest animal can get snappy when he or she can't see.
- All but the most social dogs and cats should be kept in a separate room during trick-or-treat visiting hours. Too many strangers can be scary for a dog or cat.
- When opening the door for trick-or-treaters, be very careful your cat or dog doesn't dart outside. If possible, remove the top half of your screen/storm door and pass the candy through the opening.
- Make sure your dog or cat is wearing proper identification. If for any reason they escape and become lost, you increase the chances that they will be returned to you.

If your pet has been exposed to hazards, contact your veterinarian or an animal emergency hospital immediately. Prompt treatment may help save your pet's life. The Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center can be reached at 1-800-222-1222. Additionally, the ASPCA has a unique Animal Poison Control 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week national emergency hotline (1-888-426-4435.) For a \$50 consultation fee, hotline veterinarians offer advice and answers to questions about toxic substances.

Anyone suspecting animal neglect or abuse is encouraged to call the Denver Animal Shelter Abuse Hotline at 303-698-0080, or contact the [Dumb Friends League](#), Animal Cruelty Investigations, at 303-923-0022.

Written by Content Developer [Betsy Kimak](#), Customer Information Services. Sources: Denver Police and Fire Departments, Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center, Denver Animal Control, Denver Dumb Friends League, ASPCA, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

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