

Press Release
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Halloween

Whether you'll welcome small ghosts and goblins who knock on your door or you opt to attend a Halloween party, be prepared to control eating of sweets by your youngsters and yourself to avoid the unhealthy effects of sugar overload.

Parents can help prevent young treat-or-treaters from both tummy aches and cavities, as well as promote healthy snack habits, without taking the fun out of Halloween just by remembering a few tips:

- Discourage sticky candies or foods like dried fruits, mints, caramelized desserts and toffee. They adhere to the teeth and prolong acid exposures.
- Try limiting your children's sweet intake to a set time of the day, preferably when they are at home so they can brush and floss thoroughly afterwards.
- Encourage children to select sweets based on the Food Guide Pyramid because eating them with other foods help clear the mouth of potential acids.
- Remind your young trick-or-treaters not to eat candy as they go from door to door, until a trusted adult has inspected their bounty. Serve them a nourishing, well-balanced meal before they start trick-or-treating so they won't be tempted by hunger.
- Encourage them to brush and floss their teeth **before and after** they eat candy. Cleaning teeth first is important because it helps reduce bacteria that reacts with sugar to produce acids that result in tooth decay.

Instead of handing out sugary, sticky foods, substitute small packages of nuts, toasted corn, sunflower seeds or pretzels. Small non-food items are also good, health treats. Someone told me that through out the year when they go to fast-food restaurants they purchase children meals and save the small, packaged toys that are included to give at Halloween.

If you're a traditionalist and need tasty morsels for a party or the goblins you know personally, all ages will like this Pumpkin Cheese Ball.

Pumpkin Cheese Ball

1 – 8 oz. pkg. cream cheese-reduced fat
½ cup canned solid pack pumpkin
1 jar (2 ½ oz) dried beef slices, chopped*
2 cups (8 oz) shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
¼ cup crushed pineapple, well drained
1 tbsp. chopped onion
short celery stalk and parsley, garnish

Combine cream cheese and pumpkin, mixing until well blended. Stir in beef, cheese, pineapple and onion; mix well. Chill at least one hour. Form into large ball. Score sides with knife to resemble pumpkin. Garnish with celery for stem and parsley. Serve with crackers. Yield: 25 servings. Approximate values per servings: 65 calories, 5 g fat, 16 g cholesterol, 3.5 g protein, 1 g carbohydrates, 151 g sodium. *Rinse beef to reduce sodium.