



THE CANADIAN DENTAL
HYGIENISTS ASSOCIATION
L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE
DES HYGIÉNISTES DENTAIRES

For immediate release (Offert en français sur demande)

Media Release

Dental Hygienists Offer Tooth-Friendly Tricks & Treats for Halloween

October 28, 2019 (Ottawa, ON) — As witches and wizards prepare to haunt neighbourhoods across Canada on October 31, dental hygienists urge us all to be mindful of warding off cavities on Halloween night.



While the new *Canada's Food Guide*

emphasizes sugar reduction for good overall health, dental hygienists have known for years that there is a link between high sugar intake and tooth decay (dental caries). Halloween treats—particularly sticky and chewy candies—can get stuck in the grooves of teeth; hard candies keep sugar in the mouth for long periods, potentially damaging tooth enamel. While no one wants to take the “treat” out of trick-or-treating, a little bit of restraint and advance planning can go a long way to maintaining children’s oral health. As Leanne Huvenaars, president of the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA) explains, “Reducing overall sugar consumption, carefully timing when treats are eaten, and promoting good oral hygiene habits can prevent tooth decay and help your child to have a cavity-free Halloween.” Here are some “tricks” from Canadian dental hygienists for a tooth-friendly night of fun.

- Choose sugar-free candy and chewing gum or dark chocolate over toffees, lollipops or other hard treats. The less time that sugar is in contact with the teeth, the better.
- Hand out small toys, stickers, temporary tattoos or glow sticks instead of candy.
- Set a daily limit on treats and remind children to brush their teeth before eating candy.
- Encourage children to drink a glass of water to rinse away the sugar after eating if brushing beforehand is not an option.
- Have your children eat their candy after a meal rather than as a mid-day snack.

Parents and guardians can continue to encourage good oral health after Halloween by celebrating National Brush Day on November 1. It’s a perfect time to give everyone in the family a new toothbrush and talk about the importance of keeping teeth clean. “Make a pledge with your

children to brush for two minutes, twice a day, with a fluoride toothpaste, and show them how to brush their teeth and tongue and clean between their teeth,” Huvenaars adds. Together with regularly scheduled dental hygiene appointments, proper oral hygiene care at home will keep our children smiling through Halloween and beyond!

CDHA is the collective national voice of more than 29,549 dental hygienists in Canada, directly representing 20,000 individual members, including students. Since 1963, CDHA has worked to advance the profession and promote the importance of oral health. Dental hygiene is the sixth largest registered health profession in Canada with professionals working in a variety of settings, including independent dental hygiene practice, with people of all ages, addressing issues related to oral health. For more information on oral health, visit: www.dentalhygienecanada.ca.

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