



Food Safety for Spooky Fall Celebrations

Fall signals a new season for all, with fresh crisp air, cool temperatures, and fun things to do with friends and family. Fall celebrations like visiting pumpkin patches and Halloween parties are great family activities and fun for the kids! These events are also a wonderful time to focus on food safety and health.



Check out these tips when putting together a spook-tacular celebration for a **SAFE HALLOWEEN!**

- **S** – Swords, knives and other costume accessories should be short, soft, and flexible.
- **A** – Avoid trick-or-treating alone. Older youth should walk in groups and younger children with a trusted adult.
- **F** - Fasten reflective tape to costumes and bags to increase visibility.
- **E** – Examine all treats for choking hazards and tampering before eating. Help children practice moderation and space out sweet treats.
- **H** - Hold a flashlight while trick-or-treating to help you see others and others see you. Encourage youth to walk and not run from house to house
- **A** - Test make-up in a small area first. Remove it before bedtime to prevent skin and eye irritation.
- **L** - Look both ways before crossing the street. Use crosswalks wherever possible.
- **L**- Lower the risk of serious eye injury by not wearing decorative contact lenses.
- **O** – Only walk on sidewalks whenever possible, or on the far edge of the road facing traffic.
- **W** - Wear well-fitting masks, costumes, and shoes to avoid blocked vision, trips, and falls.
- **E** - Eat only factory-wrapped treats. Avoid eating homemade treats made by strangers.
- **E** - Enter homes only if you are with a trusted adult. Only visit well-lit houses.
- **N** - Never walk near lit candles or luminaries.

If you are hosting a party, here are tips:

- Use party games and trick-or-treat time as an opportunity for kids to get their daily dose of 60 minutes of physical activity.
- Be sure walking areas and stairs are well lit and free of obstacles.
- Prepare a number of small platters and dishes ahead of time and replace the serving dishes with the fresh ones throughout the party.
- Keep cold foods refrigerated until serving time. Perishable foods should not be left out at room temperature for longer than two hours.

This article was written by Amy Peterson and has been peer-reviewed. It was updated in 2025.

Source: Halloween Safety Tips, FDA, <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/halloween-safety-tips-costumes-candy-and-colored-contact-lenses>