

Halloween Treats: How much is OK for Kids?

Halloween is a favourite holiday for many children. But after the fun of trick or treating is over, how do we approach all the leftover sweets? Involving children in managing their Halloween treats can actually be a great learning opportunity for them to regulate their own eating and support a healthy relationship with food. If children are given unlimited access to [sweets from time to time](#), they are actually less likely to eat too many sugary foods in the long run.

Try these three steps*:

1. Let your child get excited, sort, and eat as much as they want on Halloween night and the next day.
2. After the second day, ask your child to put the treats away and keep it to only sit-down meal and snack times. They can choose a couple of pieces at meals and as much as they want at snack. You offer structure and this teaches them to manage sweets with other foods they eat.
3. If your child can follow these steps, they can be left in charge of the treats. Otherwise, follow step 2 until they can stick to the structure.



By following these steps, your child will still feel in control of their stash of candy and you will still be in control of what is offered at meals and snacks.

*Adapted from Ellyn Satter's article [The sticky topic of Halloween candy](#)

Five more Halloween tips:

- Offer regular meals and snacks, including dinner, before children go trick-or-treating.
- At Halloween parties, include choices from [Canada's food guide](#) such as popcorn, roasted pumpkin seeds, fruit kabobs, and hot chocolate made with milk or fortified soy beverage.
- With younger children, trick or treat at only a few houses or for a short time.
- Remind your child to brush with fluoride toothpaste twice a day.
- Create a system where your child can choose to trade their treats for non-food items like fancy pencils, money, or swim passes.



Read more about how to approach sugar with kids here: [Is Sugar Unhealthy for Children?](#)

If you have any specific questions about your child's nutrition, you may contact HealthLinkBC at 8-1-1 to speak to a registered dietitian or [email a HealthLinkBC dietitian](#).