

CAMP HILL, Pa. (Oct. 18, 2022) — To take the “fright” out of kids’ oral health this Halloween, United Concordia Dental is encouraging the swapping of sugary treats for healthy alternatives on Trick-or-Treat night.

Research shows that cavities are one of the most chronic diseases affecting children today. And according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than half of children aged six to eight have had a cavity in at least one of their baby teeth. Tooth decay, if left untreated, can cause pain and infections that may lead to issues in other areas of a child’s life, including eating, speaking and learning.

One way to lessen the risk of tooth decay is avoiding sugary foods.

“Sugar feeds the natural bacteria in your mouth, causing harmful acids to eat away at the outer layer of your teeth over time. While all candy contains sugar, hard candy, as well as sticky, gummy candy, are the most damaging,” said Roosevelt Allen, DDS, MAGD, ABGD, chief dental officer, United Concordia Dental. “There are many fun candy alternatives out there that are better choices for maintaining children’s oral health.”

Here are some alternative treats to consider giving out this Trick-or-Treat.

- Organic juice boxes — Besides storing well, organic juice boxes make for a smart treat to share with thirsty trick-or-treaters. While they exclude the extra chemicals, organic juice boxes can be high in sugar. Be sure to select one with lower sugar amounts per serving.
- Honey sticks — High-quality honey is a healthy, sweet treat that’s rich in antioxidants and minimally processed. In stick form, the honey is individually wrapped making it easier to share.
- Apple cider or hot cocoa drink packets — Help trick-or-treaters warm up after a chilly night of adventuring with warm drink packets like apple cider or hot cocoa. To make them extra fun, glue googly eyes on the packets or dress them up like mummies with tissue paper.
- Toothbrushes — Handing out toothbrushes is a great way to promote preventive oral care at an early age. Choose versions that feature popular characters to increase appeal.
- Glowsticks or glow jewelry — Illuminate kids’ costumes and help light their way with glowsticks or glow bracelets or necklaces.

For more oral health tips, visit the Oral Health Resources section at UnitedConcordia.com.

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