

Food for Thought

October 2025

Tricks & Treats for Halloween

During the month of October there are a lot of sweet foods available that make it easy to over-indulge. Whether you're a trick-or-treater, a party host, or staying home, here are a few tips to make your Halloween season healthier:



For Trick-or-Treaters

- **Fill up first.** A well-balanced meal before Halloween festivities will provide nutrition and hopefully help prevent eating too much candy.
- **Focus on the experience.** Instead of focusing on candy, have fun with the costumes, admire the spooky Halloween decorations, enjoy visiting with people in the neighborhood, and sing Halloween songs as you walk around. Enjoy a treat or two, but avoid candy being the focus of your festivities.
- **Get moving.** Walk with your kids instead of driving them from house to house. Consider setting goals for how far you'll walk or compete to see who walks the most steps.

For Party Hosts

- **Have fun with food.** Be creative and come up with healthy Halloween themed snacks meals that can be as fun as sugary treats.
- **Keep guests on their feet.** Include games that get people moving. A zombie dance party, musical chairs to Halloween music, or a pumpkin toss are all fun ways to get moving.
- **Rethink the drink.** We often forget about the extra sugar in beverages. Offer water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages. You can make it fancy with sparkling water and a splash of 100% orange juice, garnished with orange slices and berries.

For the Stay-At-Home Crew

- **Save some candy for the trick-or-treaters.** As you sit at home waiting for the doorbell, you may find your hand wandering to the candy bowl. Set the bowl across the room so you won't have such easy access to it.
- **Don't be afraid to be *that* house.** Most kids are just as happy with a healthy snack or a non-edible item. Hand out snack-sized bags of pretzels, popcorn, or 100% juice boxes. Pencils, stickers, and other Halloween themed trinkets are also good ideas for non-food items.



Mummy Muffin Pizzas

4 whole-grain English muffins
1 jar pizza sauce
1 small can, sliced olives
2 tbsp green pepper, diced
4 sticks, mozzarella string cheese



1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Split English muffins. Cover each half with pizza sauce.
3. Place two olive slices on the muffin for the mummy's eyes. Fill center of olive slice with green pepper for pupils. Use pepper pieces to make other facial features, if desired.
4. Pull apart cheese sticks into thin strips. Layer on top of muffin to create mummy wrap.
5. Bake on a greased sheet pan for 5 to 8 minutes or until cheese is bubbly and muffins are toasted.

"Boo-nana" Ghosts



These are made by cutting a banana in half and pressing mini chocolate chips into the top to look like eyes and a mouth. For a more professional look, use melted chocolate to pipe on the faces instead.

Clementine Pumpkins

Create these by peeling clementines and placing a small, thin piece of celery or cucumber in the top to resemble a pumpkin stem.

Candy Corn Skewers

Make these fruit kebabs by layering pineapple, cantaloupe, and banana slices on a skewer.

Sources: <https://extension.usu.edu/news/tricks-and-treats-for-a-healthy-halloween>; <https://extension.wvu.edu/food-health/recipes/2021/10/26/healthy-halloween-snack-spooktacular#:~:text=Ingredients,Serving%20size:%20%20muffin%20halves>; <https://extension.unh.edu/blog> retrieved 10/01/25

Eat Smart Idaho can help you learn how to eat well for less. For information on Eat Smart Idaho classes, contact the Nutrition Instructor in your county:

Panhandle: Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai & Shoshone Counties
208-292-2525

North Central Idaho: Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis, & Nez Perce Counties
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