



Keep your kids' smiles healthy during Halloween – and beyond.

As your little ones bring home bags teeming with sweets this Halloween, Washington Dental Service wants you to remember important information and tips to help your children avoid tooth decay:

- More than 51 million hours of school time are lost each year because of tooth decay and related problems.*
- Have your children brush with fluoridated toothpaste and floss twice a day.
- Offer your children a new, brightly-colored toothbrush as a final Halloween “goodie.”
- Serve a healthy dinner. A good meal before trick or treating leaves less room for sugary treats.
- Ask your dentist about **dental sealants** and **fluoride varnishes** as preventive measures to protect children’s teeth.
- For fun Halloween giveaways, consider:
 - Halloween pencils
 - Coloring books
 - Stickers

**Surgeon General's Report, 2000*



Too much sugar and cavities don't have to be the scariest part of Halloween!

Halloween means your little ghosts and goblins may be eating sugary treats more often, which can increase the likelihood of cavities. Because dental disease is the number one chronic disease of early childhood, Washington Dental Service offers some simple tips to help prevent dental disease.

- Offer tooth-friendly treats, such as:
 - Sugar-free candy
 - Nuts
 - Cheese
- Try treats – like gum and mints – with Xylitol, a natural sweetener that prevents bacteria from producing acids that cause tooth decay.
- Avoid snacks that are sticky, chewy or hard.
- Discourage frequent snacking, called “grazing,” to limit how often your child consumes sweets, juice, soda and carbohydrate snacks.
- Encourage kids to drink water throughout the day, especially after eating sweets and food with carbohydrates – to help rinse sugar away from teeth.