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## Media Release

# Trick or Treatment? Dental Hygienists Advise you to Protect Your Oral Health at Halloween

October 26, 2015 (Ottawa, ON) – Canada’s dental hygienists remind all ghosts and goblins preparing for a night of Halloween fun to beware of treats—particularly sticky and chewy candies—that can get stuck in the grooves of teeth and increase risk of cavities and tooth decay.

While no one wants to take the “treat” out of trick-or-treating, a little bit of restraint and advance planning can go a long way to maintaining children’s oral health. As Mandy Hayre, president of the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA) explains, “Approximately 19,000 children under the age of 6 undergo day surgery each year to treat dental decay. The careful timing of treats and the promotion of good oral hygiene habits can prevent tooth decay and help your child to have a cavity-free Halloween.” Canadian dental hygienists offer the following tips for a safe and smile-filled Halloween.

- Choose tooth-friendly treats like sugar-free gum, dark chocolate, and packets of pretzels or crackers to hand out at the door. Visit [The Mouth Monsters](#) for more great ideas.
- Consider handing out small toys, stickers, temporary tattoos or glow sticks instead of candy.
- Download and print copies of Halloween colouring and activity sheets, from [www.dentstrong.com](http://www.dentstrong.com) or ADA’s [Mouth Healthy Kids](#), for your trick-or-treaters.
- Set a daily limit on treats and remind children to drink water to rinse away the sugar after eating.
- Have your children eat their candy after a meal rather than as a mid-day snack.
- Introduce the “Halloween Fairy” to your young children. If they set out candy at bedtime, the Halloween Fairy will replace it with a small toy overnight.

Parents can continue to encourage good oral health after Halloween by celebrating National Brush Day on November 1. Make a pledge with your children to brush for two minutes, twice a day, every day, and show them how to brush their teeth and tongue and clean between their teeth. Hayre adds, “Together with regularly scheduled dental hygiene appointments, proper oral hygiene care at home will keep our children smiling through Halloween and beyond!”

Serving the profession since 1963, CDHA is the collective national voice of more than 26,800 registered dental hygienists working in Canada, directly representing 17,500 individual members including dental hygienists and students. Dental hygiene is the sixth largest registered health profession in Canada with professionals working in a variety of settings, including independent dental hygiene practice, with people of all ages, addressing issues related to oral health. For more information on oral health, visit: [www.dentalhygienecanada.ca](http://www.dentalhygienecanada.ca).

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