



THE CANADIAN DENTAL  
HYGIENISTS ASSOCIATION  
L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE  
DES HYGIÉNISTES DENTAIRES



For immediate release (Disponible en français sur la demande)

## Media Release

### Trick-or-Treatment? Canada's Dental Hygienists Caution: Be Tooth Friendly This Halloween

October 24, 2013 (Ottawa, ON) – As witches and wizards prepare to haunt neighbourhoods across Canada on October 31, dental hygienists remind us to be mindful of warding off cavities on Halloween night.

Halloween treats—particularly sticky and chewy candies—can get stuck in the grooves of children's teeth and increase their risk of cavities and tooth decay. According to a recent report from the Canadian Institute for Health Information, severe tooth decay and cavities are now the leading causes of day surgery among children ages 1–5 in Canada. 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. Here are some tips from Canadian dental hygienists for a tooth-friendly Halloween.

- Choose sugar-free candy and chewing gum over traditional sweets for trick-or-treaters.
- Consider handing out small toys, stickers, temporary tattoos or glow sticks instead of candy.
- Choose chocolates and powdery candy, which dissolve quickly in the mouth, over lollipops or other hard candy. The less time that sugar is in contact with the teeth, the better.
- Feed your children a good meal before trick-or-treating. A full stomach may have less room for candy at the end of the night.
- Have your children eat their candy after a meal rather than as a mid-day snack.
- Set a daily limit on how much candy your children may eat and remind them to brush and floss afterwards.
- Encourage your children to drink a glass of water to rinse away the sugar if brushing is not an option.

Mary Bertone, president of the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association, confirms, “careful timing of treats and diligent tooth brushing can prevent tooth decay, allowing your child to have a cavity-free Halloween.” And remember: brush twice a day for two minutes, floss, rinse, and visit your dental hygienist regularly to ensure a healthy, happy smile.

Serving the profession since 1963, CDHA is the collective national voice of more than 26,800 registered dental hygienists working in Canada, directly representing 17,000 individual members including dental

hygienists and students. Dental hygiene is the 6th largest registered health profession in Canada with professionals working in a variety of settings, including independent 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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Angie D’Aoust, Director of Marketing and Communications  
1-800-267-5235 ext. 134, or by email [adaoust@cdha.ca](mailto:adaoust@cdha.ca)

[www.cdha.ca](http://www.cdha.ca)

