

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Delta Dental of Illinois
111 Shuman Boulevard
Naperville, Illinois 60563

Contact:

Jen Pennock
Kathy Schaeffer and Associates, Inc.
312-531-9931
jpennock@ksapr.com

Additional Media Contact:
Lyndsay Bradshaw
Delta Dental of Illinois
630-718-4753
lbradshaw@deltadentalil.com

A Monster Mouthful of Sugar Awaits Trick-or-Treaters

Delta Dental of Illinois Urges Good Oral Health Habits This Halloween

NAPERVILLE, Ill. (October 10, 2016) – The ghosts and goblins are out in force, and they’re coming for children’s teeth armed with sugary treats. Perhaps the spookiest thing about the Halloween holiday is the potential harm to children’s teeth as they munch on their trick-or-treat candy. With so much focus on candy, Halloween is a good time to review good oral health habits for children.

Nearly one in three Illinois children had cavities last year. And with national candy sales for Halloween expected to reach \$2.5 billion this year, parents have their work cut out for them to keep their children’s mouths healthy.

Delta Dental of Illinois offers these suggestions for parents trying to help children avoid Halloween cavities this year:

- Don’t start the holiday with a houseful of candy: hand out non-food treats this Halloween, such as glow sticks, stickers and temporary tattoos.
- All treats are not created equal. Hard candy and chewy, sticky treats are harder on teeth than other candy. Chocolate is a better treat option because it dissolves quickly, decreasing the amount of time sugar stays in contact with teeth. The best option: sugar-free gum, which helps rinse away food particles.
- Send kids out trick-or-treating on a full stomach so they will be less likely to fill up on their Halloween candy.
- Have your kids drink water and more water: water can help wash away sugar and dislodge candy particles that could remain to cause tooth decay.
- End your kids’ trick-or-treating holiday by having them brush for two minutes and floss around teeth.
- Everything in moderation: ration candy consumption daily and make it easy for kids to enjoy smaller portions by allocating smaller amounts in clear plastic bags.
- Ask your dentist if he or she participates in a candy buy-back program. Dentists participating in buy-back programs will buy kids’ candy by the pound, often shipping it out in care packages for U.S. soldiers overseas.

Tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood disease, and sugar is a major cause of tooth decay and cavities. “Every October, we turn our attention to the sugar found in Halloween candy, and the potential damage to children’s mouths,” says Katina Spadoni, DDS, dental director for Delta Dental of Illinois. “It’s important to remember that any holiday candy – in addition to regularly consumed sugary food and drinks – can wreak havoc on oral health. Parents can help children practice good oral health by following these guidelines all year long.”

How do your Halloween treats stack up? Find out at <http://www.youroralhealthhub.com/sweets-stack-up>. For some tooth-friendly Halloween activities for the kids, go to <http://www.ToothFairyTrickyTreats.com>.

About Delta Dental of Illinois

Delta Dental of Illinois is a not-for-profit dental service corporation that provides dental benefit programs to individuals and more than 5,000 employee groups throughout Illinois. Delta Dental of Illinois covers 2 million individuals, employees and family members nationwide. Delta Dental of Illinois is based in Naperville, Illinois and offers single-site administration and client services.