



Connecticut State Dental Association

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CONNECTICUT DENTISTS PARTICIPATE IN HALLOWEEN CANDY BUY BACK PROGRAMS

*The Connecticut State Dental Association shares tips for enjoying
Halloween candy and limiting tooth decay*

SOUTHINGTON, CT – Halloween 2010 had approximately 41 million trick-or-treaters participate between the ages of 5 to 14, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The [Connecticut State Dental Association](http://www.CSDA.com) (CSDA), the trusted leader and voice for oral health care in Connecticut believes children should enjoy the evening of costumes and sweets, but parents need to be aware of how to protect their children’s teeth from tooth decay, one of the most common childhood diseases.

“Children need strong, healthy teeth to chew their food and speak,” said Dr. Tatiana Barton, CSDA President. “We don’t want to discourage children from enjoying Halloween, and therefore we have several recommendations and tips for parents about maintaining healthy teeth.”

Tooth decay occurs when candy and other sugary foods and drinks are consumed. The bacteria in your mouth mixes with the sugars and produces acids that attack tooth enamel. A major offender is sour candies, which can cause permanent erosion of the tooth enamel. Sour candies in conjunction with bacteria in the mouth causes a greater buildup of acid to form, which eats away at the protective tooth enamel leading to a larger number of children with permanent erosion which can become more sensitive to hot, cold or sweet foods and drinks. Candies that dissolve slowly in the mouth tend to cause greater damage.

According to the CSDA, there are several steps that can be taken to help reduce tooth decay and still allow children to enjoy their Halloween treats:

- **Consume sugary foods with meals.** Saliva production increases during meals, which ~~which~~ This helps neutralize acid production and as a result decreases tooth exposure to these acids.
- **Drink more water.** Consuming optimally fluoridated water can help prevent tooth decay. If you choose bottled water, check the label for fluoride content.

- **Limit sticky candies.** Candy that sticks to teeth, such as gummy candies and taffy make it hard for saliva to wash away the sugar.
- **Floss Daily and brush your teeth twice a day** with an ADA-accepted fluoride toothpaste.
- **Visit your dentist regularly.**

Another way that parents can limit the number of sweets consumed during the days following Halloween is through candy buy back programs. Many dental offices throughout the State hold such programs, which allow children accompanied by an adult, to bring unopened candy to participating dental offices and receive money and goodie bags in return. This candy is then shipped to U.S. Armed Forces stationed overseas and other organizations. For a list of participating dental offices visit the CSDA Community Outreach Calendar, <http://www.csda-public.com/CharitableCalendar/CharitableCalendar.html>. Programs are taking place throughout the month of November.

About Connecticut State Dental Association

The Connecticut State Dental Association (CSDA) has approximately 2,670 members including dentists, dental hygienists and dental assistants. As the trusted leader and voice for oral health care in CT, the CSDA has advocated for the public's health and promoted the art and science of dentistry since 1864. For more information about the CSDA, visit the Association's Web site at www.csda.com.

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