

Halloween Guide

For many families newly diagnosed with type 1 diabetes (T1D), few words instill as much fear as Halloween. A whole holiday centered on candy can be a lot for families to handle. However, with the right tools and attitude, Halloween can be just as fun for someone with T1D as it is for any other goblin or ghoul.

Here are some helpful tips for having a T1D scare-free Halloween.



Make A Plan

Plan ahead to help make a potentially challenging holiday manageable. It's important to make sure that teachers, neighbors and temporary caregivers all know how to handle the abundance of snacks and excitement. Things they should know include:

- The amount of candy you are comfortable with your child consuming
- How you plan to manage insulin dosing based on activity level, blood sugar readings and treats
- Any foods they should avoid particularly due to allergies or gluten intolerance
- The symptoms of low blood sugar (hypoglycemia) and high blood sugar (hyperglycemia) and how to treat each
- A parent or guardian's contact information



Know Your Carb Counts

From candy corn to bite-sized candy bars, it's important to know accurate carb counts to administer the correct insulin dosage. Here is a chart with some of the most common candies of the season, but always look up anything you are unsure about.

For more carb counts, check out this list: jdrf.org/candycarbs.

✨ Please follow local and federal CDC guidelines as it pertains to COVID-19 when it comes to trick-or-treating, social gatherings and social distancing.

Candy	Size	Total Carbohydrate Grams
Blow pop	1 pop	13g
Candy Corn	19 pieces	36g (1.9g per piece)
Fun size candy bar	1 bar	10-15g
Hershey's Kiss (milk chocolate)	9 pieces	25g (2.8g per Kiss)
Jolly Rancher (hard candy)	1 piece	6g
M&M (fun size bag)	1 bag	13g
Reese's Peanut Butter Cups	2 1oz cups	24g
Skittles	15 skittles	15g (1g per Skittle)
Sour Patch Kids	16 pieces	37g (2.3g per piece)
Swedish Fish	19 pieces	36g (1.9g per fish)
Twizzler	1 stick	9g

Trick or Treat

Running around during the evening hours may not be a part of your child's typical routine. Here are a few tips to ensure that trick-or-treat outings go smoothly.

- The activity and excitement around trick-or-treating can cause low blood sugars, so talk to your diabetes healthcare team about setting a lower temporary basal rate to account for the extra nighttime exercise.
- Lower temperatures can contribute to low blood sugar. Regardless the type of costume, make sure your child stays warm.
- No matter how complicated the costume, pumps and continuous glucose monitors (CGM) should be easily accessible. Find a place to stash your child's insulin pump and CGM under their costume. There are a variety of products designed to hold T1D supplies and gear to make the outing easier for everyone.
- Have a plan for eating candy and food while trick-or-treating.
- Take inventory! Sneakily consumed candy could be the explanation for elevated Halloween blood sugars. All of those treats can be tempting.

Halloween Treat Alternatives

People with T1D should enjoy Halloween treats, but it's also an opportunity to get creative!

- Save some candy for treating lows. Candies that feature dextrose as a key ingredient such as Smarties are great for quickly bringing up blood sugars, while candies with higher fat content like chocolate bars are not best suited for treating lows.
- Offer to buy back the sweets from your child. Check with your local dental offices. They often offer candy buy-back programs.
- Turn some of your child's pile of candy into alternative treats by using it as currency to buy a book, toy, computer time or other things your child enjoys.
- Give back to others! Food pantries and hunger groups often accept candy donations for those in need. And some military organizations will send candy to troops overseas.

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Have fun! Halloween should be a blast for all kids, including those with T1D. We hope these tips and tricks ensure your halloween is fun, not frightful!

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