



October Health Bulletin

Delta Dental offers tricks for avoiding scary Halloween treats.

Each year, Americans spend billions of dollars on candy. In October, much of that candy ends up in the mouths of trick-or-treating children.

As much as kids love Halloween candy, their teeth do not. Sugar has long been identified by oral health experts as a major cause of tooth decay and cavities. If not removed by brushing or some other means, naturally occurring bacteria in the mouth form a colorless, sticky film called plaque. Cavity-causing microorganisms within plaque feed on sugar and turn it into acid. This acid attacks tooth enamel and causes tooth decay.

“Cavities and tooth decay are caused by prolonged exposure to sugar,” notes Jed Jacobson, DDS, a national oral health advisor for Delta Dental Plans Association. “Parents can help their kids fight cavities by moderating the amount of candy they consume, and by limiting the amount of time that sugar comes into contact with their teeth.”

To do this, Delta Dental recommends encouraging children to eat a small amount of candy in one sitting, followed by a glass of water or a thorough tooth brushing. Parents can also help children choose candy that can be eaten quickly and easily, so as to limit the amount of time sugar is in contact with the teeth. Sugared fruit snacks, caramels, popcorn balls, taffy, and other candies that expose the teeth to sugar for long periods of time should be avoided.

Delta Dental offers these additional Halloween tips for parents:

- Encourage children to eat a good meal prior to trick-or-treating; that way, they will be less tempted to fill up on candy.
- Avoid buying Halloween candy too far ahead of time; otherwise, children (and adults) may help themselves before trick-or-treating even begins.
- Consider purchasing non-food treats (such as coloring books, pens, or pencils) for those who visit your home.

Halloween is an important time for parents to think about their children’s teeth...but oral health should be a lifelong priority, too. “Monitor your children’s candy and sugar consumption year-round to prevent cavities and tooth decay,” says Delta Dental’s Jacobson. Plus, encourage good oral health habits in your family, including brushing at least twice a day, flossing, and visiting the dentist every six months.

Taking these steps is the best way to keep your children’s teeth safe from the sugar monster—on Halloween, and all through the year.



Do you have a provider invoice, and are you unsure whether the claim has been processed?
If so, please feel free to contact your member advocate for assistance: (800) 718-8328.



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Members with health savings accounts (HSAs)

Did you know that you can manage your HSA online? The following are a few options available to you:

- view account activity;
- pay for qualified expenses; and
- fund your account.

Go to <https://www.healthequity.com> for additional tools and resources to help you get the most out of your health savings account.

Have you gotten your flu shot yet?

Flu shots are now available at your local Safeway in-store clinic at no charge to you. All you need is a voucher obtained from your human resources department—no appointment is required.

Please remember to take your APEHP voucher and medical card with you for plan identification purposes.

Would you like to win \$50?

Just answer the questions below and submit your responses before *Friday, November 11, 2011* to:

Arizona Public Employers Health Pool or Fax: (602) 222-3878
333 E. Osborn Rd., Suite 300
Phoenix, AZ 85012

Answer all questions *correctly* and you will be entered into the drawing. **GOOD LUCK!**

Name two items needed to obtain a flu shot at Safeway.

Health Equity manages what account for plan participants?

Name two ways to prevent cavities.

Name: _____ Phone number: _____

Address: _____ Employer: _____

If you have claims-related questions, please feel free to contact AmeriBen's dedicated customer service line at (866) 955-1485, or call a member advocate at (800) 718-8328.

