



PARISH

## NURSE'S NOTES FOR NOVEMBER 2022

### Español

Halloween is fast approaching, and you and your kids may be celebrating it a bit differently this year. Whatever form your celebration takes, make sure it includes [safe hygiene practices](#) such as covering your mouth and nose with a cloth face covering or mask when around others, maintaining social distance and frequent hand washing. The Centers for Disease Control also have tips for [protecting yourself and others](#).

Whether you're a ghost or zombie, vampire or witch, poor costume choices—including [decorative \(colored\) contact lenses](#) and flammable costumes—and face paint allergies can cause injuries that haunt you long after Halloween.

Enjoy a safe and happy Halloween by following these guidelines from FDA, the Consumer Product Safety Commission, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:



- Wear costumes that say “flame resistant” on the label. If you make your costume, use flame-resistant fabrics such as polyester or nylon.
  - Wear bright, reflective costumes or add strips of reflective tape so you’ll be more visible; make sure the costumes aren’t so long that you’re in danger of tripping.
  - Wear makeup and hats rather than costume masks that can obscure your vision.
  - Test the makeup you plan to use in advance. Put a small amount on the arm of the person who will be wearing it. If a rash, redness, swelling, or other signs of irritation develop where the makeup was applied, that’s a sign of a possible allergy.
  - Vibrantly colored makeup is popular at Halloween. Check the FDA’s list of [color additives](#) to see if the colors are FDA approved. If they aren’t approved for their intended use, don’t use them. This is especially important for colored makeup around the eyes.
  - Don’t wear [decorative \(colored\) contact lenses](#) that appear to change how your eyes look due to the risk of eye injury, unless you have seen [an eye care professional](#) for a proper fitting and been given instructions for how to use the lenses. See Eye Safety below for more information.
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## Safe Treats



Eating sweet treats is also a big part of Halloween fun. If you're concerned about [food safety](#), there are some things you should know.

Before you or your children go trick-or-treating, remember these tips:

- Don’t eat candy until it has been inspected at home.
- Eat a snack before heading out to avoid the temptation of nibbling on a treat before it has been inspected.
- In case of a food allergy, check the label to ensure the allergen isn’t present. Tell children not to accept—or eat—anything that isn’t commercially wrapped.
- Parents of very young children should remove any choking hazards such as gum, peanuts, hard candies, or small toys from the Halloween bags.
- Inspect commercially wrapped treats for signs of tampering, such as an unusual appearance or discoloration, tiny pinholes, or tears in wrappers. Throw away anything that looks suspicious.

For partygoers and party throwers, the FDA recommends the following tips for two seasonal favorites:

- Unpasteurized juices and juices that have not been further processed are at higher risk of food- borne illness. Look for the warning label to identify juice that hasn't been pasteurized or otherwise processed, especially packaged juice products made on site. If unsure, always ask if juice has been pasteurized or not. Normally, juice in boxes, bottles or cans from your grocer's frozen food case, refrigerated section, or shelf has been pasteurized or otherwise processed to reduce harmful microorganisms.
- Before bobbing for apples—a favorite Halloween game—reduce the risk of bacteria by thoroughly rinsing the apples under cool running water. As an added precaution, use a produce brush to remove surface dirt.

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## Eye Safety



The FDA joins eye care professionals in discouraging consumers from using illegal [decorative \(colored\) contact lenses](#). These are contact lenses that have not been approved by the FDA for safety and effectiveness. Consumers should only use brand name contact lenses from well-known contact lens companies.

If you have never worn contact lenses before, Halloween should not be the first time you wear them. Experts warn that buying any kind of contact lenses—which are medical devices and regulated as such—without an examination and a prescription from an eye care professional can cause serious eye disorders and infections, which may lead to permanent vision loss. Despite the fact that it's illegal to sell decorative contact lenses without a valid prescription, the FDA is aware that these lenses are still sold without a prescription on the Internet and in retail shops and salons—particularly around Halloween.

Although unauthorized use of decorative contact lenses is a concern year-round, Halloween is the time when people may be more inclined to use them, perhaps as costume accessories, which make the wearer's eyes appear to glow in the dark, create the illusion of vertical “cat eyes,” or change the wearer's eye color.

When they are bought and used without a valid prescription, without the involvement of a qualified eye care professional, or without appropriate follow-up care, it can lead to significant risks of eye injuries, including blindness.