

Best Practices for Halloween Activities During COVID-19

Trick-or-Treating

TRICK-OR-TREATERS

- Stay home if sick.
- Keep your trick-or-treating group small with family or close friends.
- Remain 6-feet apart from other trick-or-treaters outside your group.
- Limit the amount of time you spend at each house.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wear a face covering BOTH your mouth and nose.
- A costume mask is not a substitute for a cloth face covering unless it is made of two or more layers of breathable fabric that covers your mouth and nose and doesn't leave gaps around your face. Consider using a Halloween-themed cloth mask or wearing one that matches the costume.

NOTE: Do not wear a costume mask over a cloth mask. It can be dangerous if the costume mask makes it hard to breathe.

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then wash your hands.
- Hand sanitize (with sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol) frequently while out, especially during key times like before eating or after coughing/sneezing.
- Wash your hands when returning home and again, before you enjoy the candy.

HOMEOWNERS

- Do not hand out candy if you are sick.
- Wear a face covering over BOTH your mouth and nose.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Consider alternative ways to hand out candy, such as a drive-by or leaving candy spread out on a disinfected table.
- If participating in handing out candy from your front door, consider the following:
 - Use duct tape or chalk to mark 6-foot lines in front of home and leading to driveway/front door.
 - Position a distribution table between yourself and trick-or-treaters.
 - Creating grab-and-go candy bags instead of a communal bowl.

****If you are not comfortable handing out candy, consider leaving out a bowl of candy and turn off your lights.**

PARENTS

- Stay home if sick.
- Encourage your neighbors to participate in alternative trick-or-treating (drive-by, car parade).
- Talk with your children about safety and social distancing guidelines and expectations.
- Guide children to stay on the right side of the road always to ensure distance.
- Carry a flashlight at if trick-or-treating after dark.
- Wear a face covering over BOTH your mouth and nose.
- Wash your hands as soon as you return home.
- Encourage your children to unwrap candy, throw out the wrapper, and wash their hands before eating it.

***Do not use a cleaning product to wipe down the candy. If you want to take extra precaution, let the candy sit for 72 hours before handling and the virus will die naturally. Source: <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/new-coronavirus-stable-hours-surfaces>.*

Halloween Parties

- Consider alternative gatherings, such as parties on a virtual platform or a car parade in your neighborhood.
- If you're hosting an in-person event, please consider the following:
 - Limit the guest list to family and close friends.
 - Ask guests not to attend the party if they're experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 or if they've been exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
 - Wear a face covering over your nose AND mouth.
 - Encourage guests outside your household to maintain a 6-foot distance and wear a face covering if unable to do so.
 - Move the party outside or increase ventilation by opening windows and doors to the extent that is safe and feasible based on weather.
 - Ask guests, particularly those who live in high-risk areas, to avoid others for 14 days before the gathering.
- Before and after the party, homeowners should clean and disinfect all frequently touched surfaces, particularly in bathrooms and food preparation spaces (TV remotes, tables, doorknobs, handrails, telephones, light switches, etc.).
 - If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
 - For disinfection, use EPA-registered household disinfectants and follow the manufacturer's instructions (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.).
 - For more information on methods & products:
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.html>
 - <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>
- If you attend an in-person Halloween party or think that you may have been exposed, take extra precautions for 14 days after the event. If you develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19, contact your doctor for evaluation and testing guidance.

Note: All in-person gatherings in NYS are limited to 50 people or less. Please visit <https://forward.ny.gov/>.

Additional Resources

- Halloween and Costume Association & Harvard Global Health Institute, <https://www.halloween2020.org/>
- CDC Event Guidance, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/considerations-for-events-gatherings.html>
- CDC Face Covering Guidance, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>
- SLCPHD, <https://www.stlawco.org/Departments/PublicHealth>
- New York State, <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>