



AMERICA'S PEDIATRIC DENTISTS  
THE BIG AUTHORITY on little teeth®

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR THE MOUTH MONSTERS THIS HALLOWEEN: NOT ALL CANDY IS CREATED EQUAL**

**CHICAGO** –October 25, 2016 – Whether your children are attending Halloween parties or trick or treating in the neighborhood, the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD), the leading authority on children’s oral health, reminds parents and caregivers that it is important to pay attention to the types of treats children eat this Halloween.

Don’t be tricked, choosing the right treats may help your children steer clear of the Mouth Monsters (also known as tooth decay) –Ginger Bite-Us, Tartar the Terrible and Tooth D.K. Each year Americans spend nearly \$9 billion on candy. In October, much of that candy ends up on the teeth of the 41 million trick-or-treating children ages 5 – 14 across the U.S.<sup>1</sup> However, the AAPD wants parents to know that when it comes to keeping children’s teeth healthy, not all treats are created equal.

Dark chocolates and sugar-free gum are better for the teeth compared to gummies, caramel, sour candy or bubble gum because they are less likely to get stuck in the grooves and crevices of the teeth. If chocolate is the treat of choice, steer your kids towards dark chocolate which contains antioxidants that can stop bacteria from sticking to teeth, helping to fight gum infections and tooth decay.

Because it’s not realistic to avoid sweet treats altogether, be sure to practice moderation.

“Rather than snacking on small sugary treats all through the day, it's better to have a snack of these treats in a short period of time and then follow with plenty of water to dislodge any particles that can get stuck in the teeth,” offered AAPD President Dr. Jade Miller.

Additional Halloween tips from the AAPD include:

- Before trick-or-treating, ensure children eat a well-balanced meal to reduce chances they will fill up on empty calories and sugar
- Determine beforehand the number of treats your child can keep; exercise portion control

- Sell the rest to a local dentist candy buy-back program your community may offer
- Make sure kids drink plenty of water after eating their treats
- Suggest they swish the water around in the mouth to help dislodge particles that can get stuck and encourage the Mouth Monsters to latch onto tiny teeth
- Snacks like apples and carrots are good to eat after candy because they help dislodge candy particles
- Remember, non-food favorites like temporary tattoos, stickers and glow-sticks are great alternatives
- And don't let your young ones go to bed on Halloween night before brushing & flossing

For more Halloween tips, visit: [www.mychildrensteeth.org](http://www.mychildrensteeth.org) or feel free to take our "What's Your Candy Personality quiz," which can be found at <http://mouthmonsters.mychildrensteeth.org/whats-your-candy-personality-2/>

<sup>[1]</sup><http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

### **About the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry**

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry is the recognized authority on children's oral health. As advocates for children's oral health, the AAPD promotes evidence-based policies and clinical guidelines; educates and informs policymakers, parents and guardians, and other health care professionals; fosters research; and provides continuing professional education for pediatric dentists and general dentists who treat children. Founded in 1947, the AAPD is a not-for-profit professional membership association representing the specialty of pediatric dentistry. Its 10,000 members provide primary care and comprehensive dental specialty treatments for infants, children, adolescents and individuals with special health care needs. For further information, visit the AAPD website at <http://www.aapd.org> or the AAPD's consumer website at <http://www.mychildrensteeth.org>.

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