

## Halloween Safety Tips

In the interests of safety, MedStar will not be doing our annual Trick or Treat on Pembroke Street this year for medically challenged children and their families.

We also want to help assure this Halloween is as safe as possible for area residents. Last Halloween, a child was struck by an auto during Trick or Treat activities.

Please follow these tips to help prevent auto-pedestrian crashes!



**Have a fun and SAFE Halloween by following these safety tips:**

### For Trick or Treaters:

- Cross the street at corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks.
- Always walk on sidewalks or paths. If there are no sidewalks, walk facing traffic as far to the left as possible. Children should walk on direct routes with the fewest street crossings.
- Watch for cars that are turning or backing up.
- Teach children to never dart out into the street or cross between parked cars.
- Decorate costumes and bags with reflective tape or stickers and, if possible, choose light colors.
- Choose face paint and makeup whenever possible instead of masks, which can obstruct a child's vision.
- Have kids carry glow sticks or flashlights to help them see and be seen by drivers.

### For Drivers:

- Slow down and be especially alert in residential neighborhoods. Children are excited on Halloween and may move in unpredictable ways.
- Take extra time to look for kids at intersections, on medians and on curbs.
- Enter and exit driveways and alleys slowly and carefully.
- Eliminate any distractions inside your car so you can concentrate on the road and your surroundings.



## Halloween Safety During the Pandemic

Avoiding large gatherings, keep a [distance](#) of six feet from others, wear [cloth face coverings](#), and [wash hands](#) often.

Here are some ideas for ways to keep safety steps in place while celebrating from the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#):

### Virtual costume parties & parades

Use video chats for an online party with friends and family and show off costumes and play games. Have fun with it! Outdoor costume parades are another option, please assure everyone stays at least 6 feet apart and wears cloth face coverings.

### Making masks part of the costume

Encourage children to use their cloth face coverings as part of their costume (think surgeon or superhero!). However, be wary of painting the masks, since some paints contain toxins. Also keep in mind that a costume mask is not a substitute for a cloth face covering unless it has multiple layers of breathable fabric and covers the mouth and nose snugly. Do not wear a costume mask over a cloth face covering, because it can make breathing more difficult.

### Spooky movie night

Celebrate with a movie night and dress as your favorite characters. Do this as a family at home or consider letting your child watch with their friends while video chatting, with everyone starting the movie at the same time. For tips on finding age-appropriate movies for your child, read more [here](#).

### Halloween-themed treats

Make some fun Halloween treats as a family. Decorate a pizza with toppings in the shape of a jack-o'-lantern, for example, or make tangerine pumpkins (peel the tangerine and stick a thin slice of celery on top to look like a stem). Make sure the treats are not [choking hazards](#) if you have children under age 3.

### If there is trick-or-treating in your community...

Trick-or-treating may be discouraged or cancelled in some areas this year. A family scavenger "haunt" (hunt) for Halloween treats in your home or yard can be a fun alternative. If trick-or-treating is still on in your neighborhood, avoid large groups or clustering at doorsteps or anywhere else.

If you give out treats, consider sitting outside and lining up individually prepackaged goodies on a table for children to take (don't forget to wear your own mask!). Or, think about other ways you can safely avoid direct contact with trick-or-treaters. Some families are decorating old shipping or wrapping paper tubes to make chutes that deliver treats, for example. Non-edible treats are a good option, especially for children who suffer from [food allergies](#).

How much touching objects spreads the COVID-19 virus isn't clear. But if your child collects treats from a few, socially distanced neighbors, you may want to wipe the packages or let them sit for a couple days before giving them to your child. And, of course, good hand hygiene like washing hands or using hand sanitizer before and after trick-or-treating is always a good idea!

### Remember

Halloween during the COVID-19 pandemic is a chance for you and your children to get creative, and maybe even invent some new traditions for your family! It's also a great opportunity to model flexibility and a positive spirit. If you're excited and make it fun, your kids will have fun, too.

More importantly, this is a good time to teach children the importance of protecting not just themselves but others, as well. The decisions we make on this one day can have a ripple effect beyond our own families. Finding safe ways to celebrate can create magical memories.

**CREATE HALLOWEEN  
MAGIC AT HOME**

- Use video chat to show off costumes or host an outdoor costume parade (but stay 6 feet apart & wear cloth face coverings).
- Have a spooky movie night in costumes.



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