

Communications Office

Peterborough County-City Health Unit
10 Hospital Drive
Peterborough, ON K9J 8M1
(705) 743-1000, ext. 391
www.pcchu.ca



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, October 27, 2011, Peterborough

Health Unit Offers Tips to Have a Safe, Fun and Healthy Halloween

The Peterborough County-City Health Unit would like to remind local residents of some important health and safety tips they can use to ensure that Halloween remains an enjoyable experience for everyone.

Halloween has increasingly become focused on shelling out treats, more than on the history and meaning of the celebration. The food industry sees Halloween as an economic opportunity. Every October candy, confectionery and snack food sales at large retailers spike to a total of over \$300 million (2008) in Canada.

"Take the opportunity to talk to your children about Halloween, and look for activities that don't centre just on treats," said Paula Mattie, Public Health Nurse at the Health Unit. "Take time to enjoy activities in the community, viewing Halloween-themed movies, or doing seasonal crafts. As your children grow older discuss the impact of commercialization and marketing of Halloween on their nutrition and health."

The thrill of dressing up in costume in addition to gathering treats also makes great memories. As you and your children enjoy the fun of trick-or-treating, take the opportunity to greet and talk to your neighbours. While participating in Halloween activities and once the treats come home, here are a few things to keep in mind.

- Select costumes that are visible in the dark. Bright or light-coloured costumes are best. It is also a good idea to use reflective tape and carry a flashlight.
- To prevent falling, it is important to keep costumes short and wear shoes that fit. If you are making a costume, use materials that are fire resistant and avoid costumes with loose sleeves, pants, and skirts. Also remember October 31 can be chilly, so dress warmly.
- Tell your children to stay in well-lit areas and only stop at homes that have their outside lights turned on. Make sure they know to never to go inside homes or cars.
- Enjoy the treats in moderation. Remember that Halloween happens only once a year, so don't make a big deal about candy.
- Keep vegetables and fruits a priority by making them available at meals and

NEWS RELEASE

Communications Office

Peterborough County-City Health Unit
10 Hospital Drive
Peterborough, ON K9J 8M1
(705) 743-1000, ext. 391
www.pcchu.ca



- snacks. This will fill your child's stomach with nutritious choices, before reaching for the treats.
- Use the principle of “division of responsibility” to guide and let your child control their eating. As a parent you can decide what treats to keep, when they can be consumed and where the treats will be stored. Then let your child decide whether they will eat, and how much they can eat. This will help your child learn to respond to their body's feeling of hunger and fullness.
 - Brush and floss, brush and floss, brush and floss... to prevent dental cavities from the exposure to sugar.

For further information please visit the following Health Canada Websites:

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/advisories-avis/2011/2011_144-eng.php

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/securit/season-saison/hal/index-eng.php>

-30-

For further information, please contact:

Paula Mattie
Public Health Nurse
(705) 743-1000, ext. 344