

## COVID-19 and Halloween Safety (2021)

Central District Health (CDH) recognizes the great value of tradition and celebration when it comes to holidays, including Halloween. However, as we look for ways to balance life amidst the ongoing pandemic, health and safety must continue to be at the forefront. While some holiday activities pose less risk this year due to the availability of the COVID-19 vaccine, many traditions may still need to be revised to allow for fun but safe celebrations.

The CDC recommends that all adults and children aged 12 and older get the COVID-19 vaccine, but trick-or-treaters under the age of 12 are not yet able to be fully vaccinated. Thus, CDH is recommending continued precautions that include social distancing from those outside your household, wearing a mask indoors in public places in areas of high transmission, frequent hand washing, and avoiding activities that would put younger children at increased risk for COVID-19. CDH also recommends tracking local virus transmission rates and taking extra precautions where rates are high. (You can find current COVID-19 transmission rates and vaccine information [on the CDH website](#).)

For those who choose to celebrate Halloween, CDH urges people to opt for the lower-risk activities as outlined in this guidance for a safer Halloween celebration.

***If you do not feel well, have a respiratory or gastrointestinal illness, or have recently been exposed to someone with COVID-19, you should not participate in in-person Halloween festivities, and should not give out candy to trick-or-treaters.***

### **Lower-Risk Activities**

*These lower-risk activities can be safer alternatives*

- Participating in traditional trick-or-treating where treats are handed to children who go door-to-door and social distancing can be maintained
- Participating in one-way trick-or-treating where individually wrapped goodie bags are lined up for families to grab and go while continuing to social distance (such as at the end of a driveway or at the edge of a yard)
- Having a trunk-or-treat where treats are handed out from trunks of cars lined up in parking lots and social distancing can be maintained
- Doing a Halloween scavenger hunt where children are given lists of Halloween-themed things to look for while they walk outdoors from house to house admiring Halloween decorations
- Visiting pumpkin patches, orchards, corn mazes or haunted forests where people can maintain social distancing
- Going on hayrides or tractor rides (socially distanced if riding with people not in your household)
- Having a scavenger hunt-style trick-or-treat search with your household members in or around your home rather than going house to house

### **Higher-Risk Activities**

*Avoid these higher-risk activities to help prevent the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19*

- Attending crowded costume parties held indoors
- Going to an indoor haunted house where people may be crowded together

### **Additional Safety Note**

*Masks are still your best line of defense against spreading or contracting COVID-19*

- If choosing to participate in indoor Halloween festivities, we urge parents to incorporate a cloth mask into your or your child's costume. CDH does not advise wearing a costume mask over a protective cloth mask because it can be it hard to breathe. Instead, consider using a Halloween-themed cloth mask.
- Even those who are fully vaccinated should wear a mask in public indoor settings in communities with high transmission rates.

*To view more information and related guidance for this and other holidays, please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays/celebrations.html>*