



## October School Health Newsletter 2018 — Compiled by Beth Green RN

### Kids and cars pose the biggest Halloween safety risk

With neighborhoods filled with kids and cars, Halloween carries an especially high risk of injury.

“Halloween is the most deadly day of the year for pedestrians ages 18 and younger,” said Heather Trnka, Injury Prevention Coalition supervisor for Akron Children’s Hospital. “Children are so excited on Halloween, and they move in unpredictable ways and often dart into the street.”

To keep kids safe, teach them to cross only at street corners, after stopping to make sure no cars are coming. Even if a car stops at a stop sign, kids should make eye contact with the driver before crossing, she said. Other tips from Trnka:

- Halloween masks obscure peripheral vision and are not a good choice for kids walking around in the dark. Face paint is a safer choice.
- If trick-or-treating in an area without sidewalks, walk on the edge of the road facing traffic – and use a flashlight. Glow sticks are also great.
- Kids under 12 should not trick or treat without parental supervision. Kids who are old enough should trick or treat in groups and stay in familiar, well-lit areas.

“Be extra cautious if your kids are out on their own for the first time. These are the kids getting hit by cars, when there is no adult to tell them not to cross the street in the middle of the block,” Trnka said.

Here are some additional tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics:

- Plan costumes that are bright and reflective, and make sure they are short enough to prevent tripping, entanglement or contact with flame.
- Consider adding reflective tape or striping to costumes for greater visibility.
- Make sure costumes, wigs and accessories are flame resistant.
- If swords, canes or sticks are a part of your child’s costume, make sure they aren’t too long or sharp to prevent injury if he stumbles or trips.
- Do not use decorative contact lenses. They can cause pain, inflammation and serious eye disorders and infections, which may lead to permanent vision loss.
- Review with children how to call 9-1-1 if they ever have an emergency or become lost.

Link to Inside Children’s blog post: <https://inside.akronchildrens.org/2017/09/25/kids-and-cars-pose-the-biggest-halloween-safety-risk/>

# School Health

## Get Smarter about Snacking

Good nutrition is important for healthy growth and development, and it sets the stage for a lifetime of healthy eating.

Healthy snacks are a great way to help fill in nutritional gaps in your diet, especially if you choose ones with whole grains low-fat dairy, and fruits and vegetables. Plus, well-timed snacks, such as after school, can prevent you from getting overly hungry and overeating at mealtime.

Here are 10 fun and healthy after-school snacks that you're sure to love and will keep you focused long after school has ended.

1. "Fruit nachos" made with layers of apple slices and topped with yogurt, honey and berries
2. Make-your-own trail mix with whole-grain cereal, nuts and dried fruit
3. Greek yogurt parfait with granola and fresh berries
4. A banana rolled in yogurt and crushed cereal
5. A deli turkey or ham and cheese roll-up
6. Scrambled eggs with cheese and diced sweet peppers
7. Homemade sweet potato or other root vegetable chips
8. Fruit dip made with Greek yogurt and 1 tsp. honey, maple syrup or fruit preserves for an extra kick, and fresh fruit
9. Hummus or veggie dip made with plain Greek yogurt and ranch seasoning, and fresh-cut vegetables, such as cucumbers, zucchini or grape tomatoes
10. Mini quesadillas made with black beans and cheddar cheese stuffed in a whole grain tortilla.



November 6, 2017 by Harlan Spector

## **How to prevent the spread of cold and flu germs**

Getting a flu shot is the best way to prevent an illness that causes tens of thousands of deaths and hundreds of thousands hospitalizations every year in the United States.

But aside from vaccination, other precautions can go a long way to reduce chances of getting sick during the cold and flu season.

Certified Nurse Practitioner Dayne Adkins of Akron Children's Hospital Pediatrics, Warren Downtown offers pointers on how to avoid germs that cause colds and flu.

We often don't think about prevention steps in the home. What are the best ways to keep illness-causing germs at bay there?

Frequent hand-washing, coughing and sneezing into a tissue or your elbow are easy and quick prevention tools.

Can bacteria and viruses live on surfaces for a long time?

Yes. Some germs can live for several days on some surfaces. Lysol-type wipes can be beneficial to clean solid surfaces. Wiping down things like phones, doorknobs, remotes, etc., can prevent the spread of these germs.

People shouldn't forget cellphones, right? They can carry a lot of germs.

Correct. However, you may need special cleaners depending on the type of phone. Checking with the manufacturer is important to prevent damaging the phone.

Making kids wash their hands is important, but parents should also teach proper hand-washing technique. What's your advice?

Using soap and water for 20-30 seconds of scrubbing, or using hand sanitizer helps tremendously. When using soap and water, it is important to use warm water and scrub every surface of the hands, as well as under the fingernails for the full 20-30 seconds.

Flu viruses spread primarily through the air, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. We inhale tiny droplets others expel when they cough, sneeze or even talk. What is the best prevention there?

Encouraging the sick population to avoid others whenever possible is the best option. However, when this is not possible, we should encourage everyone to be diligent about hand hygiene. Also, everyone should cover coughs and sneezes either with a tissue or their arm.

<https://inside.akronchildrens.org/2017/11/06/how-to-prevent-the-spread-of-cold-and-flu-germs/>