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Universal Food Allergy Awareness

Is Organic Candy Worth It At Halloween?

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Did you know?? In 2005, the average American consumed 25.7 pounds of candy, per capita, much of it around Halloween?! From belly aches to allergic reactions, parents can help kids avoid Halloween hazards.

There is growing evidence that many allergies are caused by the ingredients in our diet. About 40% of the population suffers from allergies, and annual medical costs exceed \$4 billion. According to [Kenneth Bock, MD](#), allergies now affect 20% of children. Maybe it's time to think about what we're slinging into those jack o lanterns!

Chemicals in your candy? Ever read the side of a candy box? Artificial colors, flavors, preservatives, pesticides and chemical toxins! According to [Pure Fun Candy](#), the FDA does not monitor these flavorings nor require that they be tested. Rather, (and this is scary!) the concept of "threshold of toxicological concern" has been proposed to set acceptable daily intake for chemicals of unknown toxicity, apparently on the theory that a little bit can't hurt! Ever seen a kid eat a 'little bit' of candy!?

Research out of the UK suggests that these chemicals do affect the brain chemistry of children, causing hyperactivity and ADHD like behavior. The research is so strong that [Wal-Mart in the UK agreed to ban these ingredients in children's foods](#) and [government agencies around the world have banned](#) these chemical additives in children's foods.

[And as if that wasn't enough, the Today Show points out](#) that you may also want to avoid high fructose corn syrup, another chemically engineered ingredient found in our kids' foods and treats (but not found in children's foods in Canada!), given the controversial role that it appears to play in diabetes!

According to the CDC, one out of every three children now has obesity, one out of every three children now has diabetes, and one out of every three kids now has allergies, asthma, ADHD or autism. Given [recent reports by CNN addressing toxicity in children](#) and the fact that none of these chemical additives now found in our kids' Halloween candy have been tested by the FDA, are we gambling with the health of your kiddos?

Perhaps here in the US, we should take a cue from mothers in Europe, Canada and Australia and do our kids a favor. Engage them in a candy swap! For every 2-3 pieces of conventional candy that they collect, let them "buy" an organic treat, a sticker or some small toy!

It might just be the savviest thing you could do this Halloween!