

# Halloween

Many traditional Halloween activities can be high-risk for spreading viruses but can also be easily modified to reduce risk of COVID-19 exposure to a **moderate level** (see below). There are several safer, alternative ways to participate in Halloween that each and every one of us should consider.

**If you may have COVID-19 or you may have 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 safe alternatives:

- Carving or decorating pumpkins with members of your household and displaying them
- Carving or decorating pumpkins outside, at a safe distance, with neighbors or friends
- Decorating your house, apartment, or living space
- Making Halloween treats like popcorn balls, pumpkin seeds, & decorate cookies
- 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 at a distance
- Having a virtual Halloween costume contest
- Having a Halloween movie night with people you live with
- Having a scavenger hunt-style (think Easter egg hunt) trick-or-treat search with your household members in or around your home

## Moderate risk activities

- 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)
  - If you are preparing goodie bags, wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 second before and after preparing the bags.
- Having a small group, outdoor, open-air costume parade where people are distanced more than 6 feet apart
- Attending a costume party held outdoors where protective masks are used and people can remain more than 6 feet apart
  - A costume mask (such as for Halloween) is not a substitute for a cloth mask. A costume mask should not be used unless it is made of two or more layers of breathable fabric that covers the mouth and nose with no gaps around the face.
  - Do not wear a costume mask over a protective cloth mask because it can be dangerous if the costume mask makes it hard to breathe. Instead, consider using a Halloween-themed cloth mask.
- Going to an open-air, one-way, walk-through haunted forest where appropriate mask use is enforced, and people can remain more than 6 feet apart
  - If screaming will likely occur, greater distancing is advised. The greater the distance, the lower the risk of spreading a respiratory virus.
- Visiting pumpkin patches or orchards where people use hand sanitizer before touching pumpkins or picking apples, wearing masks is encouraged or enforced, and people are able to maintain social distancing.

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- Having an outdoor Halloween movie night with local family friends with people spaced at least 6 feet apart
  - If screaming will likely occur, greater distancing is advised. The greater the distance, the lower the risk of spreading a respiratory virus.
  - Lower your risk by following CDC's recommendations on [hosting gatherings or cook-outs](#).

## **Higher risk activities**

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

- Participating in traditional trick-or-treating where treats are handed directly to children who go door to door
- Having trunk-or-treat where treats are handed out from trunks of cars lined up in large parking lots
- Attending crowded costume parties held indoors
- Going to an indoor haunted house where people may be crowded together or screaming
- Going on hayrides or tractor rides with people who are not in your household
- Using [alcohol or drugs](#), which can cloud judgement and increase risky behaviors
- Traveling to a [rural](#) fall festival that is not in your community if you live in an area with community spread of COVID-19

## **GENERAL SAFETY PRECAUTIONS WHEN PARTICIPATING IN HALLOWEEN TRICK-OR-TREATING AT ANY TIME**

- Children should never be allowed to go out alone on Halloween.
- Children should never eat any treats until they have been examined by an adult.
- Children should never enter strangers' homes.
- Never invite children into your home.
- Children should never accept rides from strangers.
- Children should avoid houses where lights are off.
- Instruct children not to stray from their group.
- A responsible adult should escort children while trick-or-treating.
- Adult escorts should carry flashlights.
- Keep pets inside your home, or other safe place on Halloween night.
- Children should walk, not run, during their trick-or-treat activities.
- Parents should know what route their children will be taking.
- All costumes should be made of light-colored, fireproof material.
- Children should wear proper fitting, comfortable costumes, and shoes.
- Realistic replica firearms should never be used.
- Costume masks should not be worn if they impair vision.
- Wigs should be fireproof and should not restrict vision.
- Children should always use sidewalks, not the street, for walking.
- Children should look in all directions before crossing the street.
- Set a specific time limit for your children to be out on Halloween night.