

## Tips for Healthier Fall Festivals

For many, fall events such as Halloween and Fall Festivals are times to wear costumes, go trick-or-treating, go to parties with friends and eat sweet treats. Fall celebrations are a chance to not only have fun, but also provide health snack options and to be physically active with family and friends. Make your fall season healthier this year by getting plenty of physical activity to balance food intake and help children choose wisely and eat their treats in moderation. Below are tips to make your treats and party snacks healthier.

- Give out healthier treats. The calories in all those bite-size treats can add up quickly. There are a lot of options for healthier food treats. Some examples include cereal bars, packages of dried fruit, baked pretzels, animal crackers, graham crackers, sugar-free gum, snack sized containers of pudding and applesauce, squeeze pouches of fruit, sugar-free hot chocolate or juice boxes.
- You might try giving out non-food treats. Some examples include small toys, packets of crayons, stickers, bookmarkers, bottles of bubbles, whistles and coloring books
- Promote physical activities by using party games and trick-or-treat time as a way to fit in 60 minutes of physical activity for kids. Encourage them to be active by providing small and inexpensive prizes that promote activity. Activities could include: bouncy ball, jump rope, side walk chalk for hopscotch or foursquare.
- Halloween is a good time to discuss and demonstrate the importance of moderation. Keep a track of your children's candy so they don't over do it. Let them pick a few treats on Halloween night, then let them have a few pieces each day after that.
- Show kids that treats can fit into a healthy eating plan in small amounts. Combine a treat, such as fun-size candy with a healthy snack such as fruit. Be sure they eat the fruit first, so they don't fill up on the candy.
- Snack or fun-size candies are small and easy to eat, but eating several throughout the day can add up to extra calories. Keep the used wrappers where you can see them, so they don't accidentally pile up.
- If you can't stay away from a few treats at work, start bringing healthier alternatives with you. Stock your snack bag or desk drawer with fruit cups, dried fruit, whole grain cereal, graham crackers, low-fat pudding cups, popcorn or granola bars.
- Remember that friends or co-workers may also be struggling to stay motivated to make healthy changes. Lean on each other and be there when others need encouragement. This year make an effort to bring healthier treat options to work.

### Pumpkin Pudding

- 1 (5.1 ounce) package of instant vanilla pudding mix, regular or sugar free
- 2 cup low fat milk
- 1 (15 ounce) can pumpkin
- 1 teaspoon pumpkin spice
- 1 ½ cups whipped topping

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. In a medium bowl, mix pudding and milk with a whisk, spoon or electric mixer until well blended.
3. Add pumpkin mixture and spice. Stir in whipped topping and mix well.
4. Chill until serve.

Serves: 6; Nutrition information: 190 calories; Fat: 3.5 grams; 38 grams carbohydrates; 4 grams protein.

Sources: Nebraska Extension; Clemson Cooperative Extension; and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.