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Break the Sweet Tradition

Traditionally, Halloween revolves around pumpkins, costumes, and candy. However, there are many compelling reasons to consider alternatives to handing out and consuming sugary treats on this spooky and fun holiday. Here are a few suggestions to keep the fun and excitement in the holiday while maintaining health and wellness.

LITTLE GOODIES

One of the most popular alternatives to handing out Kit Kats and Hershey's bars is offering non-food treats. Items such as stickers, temporary tattoos, glow sticks, small toys (yo-yo, kazoo, bouncy ball, bubbles), and crayons excite trick-or-treaters of all ages. The best part is that they encourage creativity and play!

HEALTHY SNACKS AND TREATS

If you'd like to give out something to eat on Halloween night, consider options like clementines, a mini box of raisins, a cheese stick, a pack of nuts, honey sticks, or a bottle of water. These choices are better for your teeth and health, and kids still love them!

CREATIVE ALTERNATIVES FOR TRICK-OR-TREATERS

PUZZLES AND BRAIN TEASERS

Small puzzles, Sudoku books, and crosswords are a fun way to challenge the minds of young trick-or-treaters. You can find these in bulk at your local dollar store or online.

TRENDY HALLOWEEN DECORATIONS

Another great alternative to candy is handing out Halloween-themed decorations such as mini pumpkins, small artificial bats and spiders, or spooky window clings. It's a great way to spread the Halloween spirit and help families enhance their Halloween decor.

TRINKETS AND COLLECTIBLES

Kids love collecting things. Whether it's small figurines, Pokemon cards, baseball cards, keychains, popular characters, LEGOS, or cars, any small and trending collectible is bound to be a hit!

This Halloween, switch things up! Give some stamps, balls, finger puppets, spider rings, or a whoopie cushion! Try something different this year for your trick-or-treaters and you'll be the house that the kids love coming to! These alternatives contribute to a healthier holiday celebration, and kids are bound to love them, too!

Farewell Summer, Welcome Fall

Fall has arrived! We now have the opportunity to experience Chicago's beautiful scenery as the lush green leaves transform into orange, red, and yellow crispy leaves, and we begin to feel a cooler breeze in the air. For me, fall is the season for projects, hobbies, and new beginnings. It's the start of a new educational year.

As the fun and family-filled summer comes to a close, the colder days and early sunsets appear. Although my summer seemed to wiz by, I soaked up as many moments of joy as possible.

The office went through a growth spurt this summer, and we hired some amazing new staff members. Part of my summer was spent hiring, onboarding, and training the new hires so you, our patients, receive the excellent standard of care you expect and deserve.

Aimee is our new office manager. She has 14 years of running dental offices under her belt. We are incredibly excited to have found a great manager to help lead our team. Her calm demeanor, dedication, and extensive knowledge about managing an office have been valuable to us.

Rachel is our new front office coordinator. When you call the office, there's a good chance you'll talk to her, and if you ever have a question about your insurance or anything financial, with 17 years of dental experience, she is your expert. We are delighted to welcome her to our team.

Melissa and Mayra are our new, very experienced assistants. They work with the hygienists and dentists in the clinical

rooms. They are knowledgeable, warm, and gentle — just what you need during your next appointment with us.

As our office bubbles with positive change, I am excited for the season ahead.

On a personal note, my summer was filled with family events. My daughters tried a new summer camp; we took a family trip to Mexico for a friend's wedding, hosted my mother-in-law from Israel for several weeks, and picked a lot of berries from our garden. Over the summer, my daughter, Sonya, mastered catching insects with her hands like fireflies and butterflies and holding her breath underwater. My youngest daughter, Maya, learned to tie her shoes and make a ponytail or two or six in her hair.

We celebrated Maya's 4th birthday in August and will celebrate Sonya's 7th birthday in October — time sure is flying. I boldly cut my hair short, the shortest it's been since I was 2. Bring on refreshing change!

Over the summer, I took another Esthetic PRF/laser course. This was my fifth regarding the topic of facial esthetics in dentistry, and we are enjoying growing our laser and PRF for facial esthetics part of the practice.

PRF is platelet-rich fibrin, present in all of our blood. Our office has been using PRF after removing a tooth and other surgical procedures for many years. We draw a

patient's blood and spin it in a centrifuge, which turns the blood into platelets the body uses to heal the extraction socket quicker and better.

Injecting it under the skin helps build lost collagen, thus reducing wrinkle lines. Our fancy laser can assist with chemical peels, removing skin moles/veins/tags, smoothing wrinkles, plumping lips, reducing snoring/sleep apnea, and other dental procedures. As I continue adding knowledge of PRF and laser facial esthetics into our practice, it's surprising to see the results. We can complement a patient's smile, reducing their fine lines and wrinkles and creating a glow and a look of "freshness" that lasts beyond first thing in the morning.



It's hard to believe that the final quarter of the year has arrived. It's a wonderful time for reflection. What did we accomplish this year? What do we still want to get done before the new year rolls around, or where else do we want to go? Or who else do we want to see? Every so often, I like to find some time to reflect on my path. If we don't plan where we want to go, the circumstances around us will just take us along its path. I always find that it's better for us to lead. I wish you a wonderful fall and hope you have time to reflect on your path, where you came from, and where you're headed. Bon voyage!

—Dr. Bernice Teplitzky

EMPOWER YOUR TEEN WITH FITNESS GOALS

A PARENT'S ROLE IN CREATING HEALTHY HABITS

Countless adults struggle to set fitness goals, so it shouldn't be surprising that many teens don't know where to start either. Parents can be a critical source of motivation and support for young adults as they create healthy habits. Whether your teen is a natural-born sports star or a bit of a couch potato, you can help them be more purposeful about exercise and fitness.

The process begins by discovering what drives them. If your teen is already active, ask what they enjoy and what goals they have for themselves. For those more reluctant to break a sweat, discuss whether they're happy with their fitness level. Are they satisfied with their current level of activity? Do they think it will continue serving them well as they age?

But even more important than their goals is their motivation. We only achieve something with a compelling reason to drive us. Whether your teen's goal is strength, weight loss, endurance, or something else, ask why it matters to them.

Don't be surprised if your teen's motivations center around their looks — after all, we live in a very appearance-conscious society. But you can both acknowledge the pressure to look a certain way while reminding your kids that their health is more important. Many reasons to exercise focus on avoiding negative emotions like insecurity, so help your teen flip their perspective and concentrate on how they want to feel in the future.

Your teen probably won't stop caring about how they look in bathing suits, but having these conversations is crucial. Adolescence is a particularly vulnerable time for developing eating disorders, so discourage calorie-counting or obsessive exercise. If you are concerned about your child's relationship with food or fitness, you should speak with their doctor.

Ideally, the focus should be on the benefits of physical activity. For

example, jumping in place creates movement in the lymphatic system. Even a few minutes of jumping jacks or running in place can have massive benefits. This simple activity together can make a family healthier and stronger.

It's important to talk about the reasons you make time to exercise. And if you don't move as much as you should, see if your teen would be interested in joining you in becoming fit together. Something as simple as taking a walk is a great way for both of you to get out and move and even helps build a bond. Try creating a ritual of walking after dinner for great health benefits!

Parents play a crucial role in shaping their children's relationship with fitness. Help them understand the lifelong advantages of being active so that the habits they create now follow them well into adulthood.



I'M SUPPOSED TO CLEAN THAT?!

4 Items in Your Home That Need More Maintenance Than You Think

If you wash your sheets more than once or twice a month, you already have better bedroom hygiene than 60% of Americans. But according to experts, even weekly washing isn't enough! To get a completely hygienic night's sleep, you should clean your mattresses every six months. Who knew? Here's how to do it, along with tips for maintaining three other household items you've probably overlooked.

Your Mattress — You can use dozens of methods and products to clean your mattress, but the old-fashioned way only requires two things: baking soda and a vacuum cleaner. After you've stripped your sheets, peel back your mattress protector and dust your entire mattress with baking soda. Wait 10 minutes, then vacuum the powder up!

If you're feeling ambitious, add a second vacuum pass before the baking soda and use a mixture of baking soda, salt, and water to lift stains. Let the concoction sit on the stain for 30 minutes, then wipe it away.

Your Kitchen Backsplash — You probably wipe down your counters regularly, but have you deep-cleaned your backsplash? If not, it's probably coated with years of grease and food particles. Start with a quick soap and water rinse to get rid of the ick. Then, use a mixture of lemon juice, vinegar, and baking soda in a 1:1:2 ratio to dissolve the grease. Sponges are excellent for scrubbing tile surfaces, and you can tackle the grout with a toothbrush.

Your Basement Drain (Or Any Unused Drain) — If you have a basement or garage with a drain in the floor or even a seldom-used guest bathroom shower drain, you should take a few minutes every month to pour a bucket of water into it. This will keep your drain from drying out and prevent nasty sewage odors and pests.

Your Throw Pillows — Remove the covers from your throw pillows monthly and toss them in the wash to keep them from becoming smelly or discolored. Every other month, you should also wash the *inside* of the pillow in your washing machine or by hand, depending on its material. If you have down-filled or highly decorated pillows, take them to the dry cleaner for a refresh.

START YOUR MORNING RIGHT

5 Benefits of Drinking Lemon Water

Starting your day with a glass of lemon water has become a popular morning ritual for many health-conscious individuals. Lemon water offers a refreshing, flavorful, and invigorating way to kickstart your morning while providing various health benefits. Let's examine why this simple (and satisfying) concoction has gained so much popularity.

MAINTAINS HYDRATION

Hydration is key for your overall health — it supports digestion, circulation, and many body functions. Most humans don't drink enough water! Adding lemon to your water makes it more palatable and encourages you to drink more throughout the day.

RICH IN VITAMIN C

Lemons are a potent source of vitamin C, an important antioxidant that helps strengthen the immune system. Did you know that just one squeeze of lemon water accounts for roughly 21% of a person's daily recommended RDA value? A morning dose of vitamin C from lemon water can boost your body's defenses against common illnesses such as colds and the flu.

AIDS IN DIGESTION

Lemon water helps to stimulate the production of gastric juices, which promotes optimal digestion and bowel movements while decreasing the risk of indigestion and bloating. The acid in lemons also teams up with your stomach acid (which declines with age) to break down food. It also helps detoxify your liver if taken on an empty stomach. First thing in the morning is best!

WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

Drinking lemon water to start your day can be a valuable addition to a weight management plan. It's low in calories, boosts your metabolism, assists appetite control, and helps you feel more full.

PROMOTES HEALTHY SKIN

The vitamin C in lemons contributes to healthier and more radiant skin. It supports collagen production, which can help to reduce wrinkles, blemishes, and the effects of aging. Lemon water may also help reduce acne.

Making your own lemon water is simple! Just squeeze the juice of half of a lemon into a glass of warm (not boiling) water. You can adjust the lemon-to-water ratio to suit your taste preferences. For extra flavor, sprinkle in cinnamon or a drizzle of honey or maple syrup! Cheers!



Homemade Pumpkin Spice Latte



Save money this October with this delicious homemade pumpkin spice latte that will taste better than any store-bought coffee.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 shots espresso (or 1/2 cup freshly brewed coffee)
- 1 cup milk of choice
- 3 tbsp pumpkin purée
- 1-2 tbsp maple syrup
- 1 tsp pumpkin pie spice
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- Whipped cream for topping (optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. In a small pot on medium heat, heat milk until simmering but not boiling.
2. Make your espresso (or coffee) and pour into a large mug or Mason jar. Add pumpkin purée, maple syrup, pumpkin pie spice, and vanilla and stir until well combined.
3. With a milk frother, froth the heated milk until foamy. Then, pour into your pumpkin espresso mixture and top with whipped cream. For decoration, you can sprinkle more cinnamon or pumpkin spice on top!

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