



# Food For Thought

---

## *Healthy Ideas for Preschoolers*

---

## HEALTHY HALLOWEEN TREATS

Halloween brings out the kid in all of us. It's fun to get dressed up in a costume and parade around the neighborhood or go to a party. Treats are a part of the fun. However, treats don't have to be sticky, gooey candy.



### Treats to Give

When gathering the treats you will offer this year think about some possible low-calorie, low-fat options. Here are some ideas to get you started thinking:

- Cheese and cracker packages
- Sugar-free gum
- Cheese sticks
- Juice box packages
- Small packages of nuts or raisins
- Package of instant cocoa mix
- Peanuts in the shell

You could also consider giving some non-food treats such as stickers, balloons, crayons, pencils, colored chalk, erasers, whistles, baseball cards, rubber spiders or worms. A friend of mine used to give nickels. In today's economy that may need to be dimes.

### Trick or Treating

Make sure children eat a meal or snack before going trick-or-treating so they won't be tempted to dig into their bag of goodies before they get home.

When children get home, check the treats and keep only treats which are unopened. Be sure to inspect fruits and homemade goods for anything suspicious.



It's better to eat trick-or-treat candy over several days as a substitute for dessert or a few pieces along with a healthy snack.

### Halloween Party

Having a party for your children and a few friends can reduce safety concerns. Some nutritious treats for your party could include popcorn, apples, grapes, bananas, unshelled peanuts, and not-too-sweet cookies.

Kids could help with making the treats like "Pizza Faces." Let kids arrange sliced olives, green peppers, mushrooms, pepperoni, and other things on English muffins brushed with tomato sauce. Top with grated cheese for "hair" and heat in the microwave or oven until the cheese melts.

# HALLOWEEN TREATS

Here are some fun treats for ghosts and goblins who come calling or to serve at a Halloween party at your home. Have the kids help you make these. They can help with measuring, pressing the mixture in the pans or shaping into balls. Be sure everyone washes their hands before they start.

## Quick Pumpkin Cupcakes

- 1 box regular yellow or vanilla cake mix, 2-layer-size
- 2 eggs
- 1 Tablespoon oil
- 2/3 cup canned pumpkin
- 1-1/2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- 1 cup water or apple juice



### Decorations:

- Canned low-fat vanilla frosting
- Candy corn
- Black or orange jelly beans
- Black licorice

Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray each muffin cup with nonstick cooking spray or use paper cupcake liners. Blend the cake mix with the eggs, oil, pumpkin, pumpkin pie spice, and the water or juice with mixer at low speed until moistened. Beat at medium speed for 2 minutes. Spoon into the prepared muffin pan. Bake 18 minutes or until done. Cool in pan completely before frosting. Kids will love to decorate these cupcakes.

Makes about 18 cupcakes.

## Halloween Cereal Balls

- 1/4 cup margarine or butter
- 1 package (10 oz.) marshmallows
- 2 Tablespoons orange-flavored gelatin
- 6 cups crisp rice cereal
- 1/2 cup candy corn



Combine margarine and marshmallows in 2-quart glass bowl. Microwave (high), uncovered, 2 1/2 to 3 minutes or until marshmallows are puffed. Add orange gelatin; mix until combined. Stir in cereal until well coated. Mix in candy corn. Cool enough to handle.

With buttered hands, form mixture into 24 balls. Place on waxed paper until cool. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap for storage.

*Tips:* Pieces of cut black licorice can be substituted for candy corn.

Mixture can be pressed into greased 13x9-inch baking pan and cut into squares for serving.

*Per Serving: 85 calories, 1 g. protein, 2 g. fat, 119 mg. sodium, 0 mg. cholesterol*

Prepared by:  
Barbara Farnar  
Extension Educator  
Nutrition & Wellness  
Matteson Extension Center

