



Have a “Glowing” Halloween

One of the most common calls to the Nebraska Regional Poison Center this time of year involves glow sticks—the plastic tubes that are filled with a glowing liquid. Last year the Poison Center had 479 calls concerning this product—a substantial increase from the previous year. The glow sticks make children more visible in the dark while trick-or-treating—but they are soft to chew on and can be easily broken open. If children get some of the liquid in their mouth or eye there is no need to run to an emergency room. Call the Poison Center and the specialist will tell you what you need to do.

No spells will be cast on young spooks this Halloween with a few sensible tips from the Nebraska Regional Poison Center. Take the following preventive measures to keep children safe this Halloween:

- When children trick-or-treat, treats should be carefully checked by adults. Homemade treats or anything out of its original wrapper should be thrown away unless parents are positive of the identity of the person from which it came.
- Providing children with a full meal before trick-or-treating will reduce the temptation for children to eat treats before they return home.
- Costumes should be warm, well fitting and non-flammable. Masks should provide adequate vision and should be removed while children are crossing streets. Use inexpensive, nontoxic face paint as an alternative to masks. All makeup and fluorescent hair sprays should be removed before going to bed. Consider using reflective tape on costumes worn after dark.
- Make sure children are accompanied by an adult and take a flashlight along if it is dark. All children should stay in their own neighborhood and only go in homes of friends and family.
- Glow sticks can cause immediate stinging and a burning sensation if the liquid comes in contact with the mouth or the eyes. Be careful when small children put these in their mouths.
- Give out non-edible treats such as stickers, pencils, erasers, or other party favors.
- Sponsor a block party as an alternative to wide-range trick-or-treating. Parties at home can substitute for, or at least shorten, trick-or-treat trips.
- Serving punch containing dry ice is not considered dangerous as long as the ice is not swallowed in its solid form. Small pieces should not be put in individual glasses. Frostbite can occur if dry ice touches the skin or mouth.
- Chocolate is very poisonous to dogs. Store all candy up and out of reach of dogs. While trick-or-treating stay away from barking dogs or upset animals.

The Nebraska Regional Poison Center offers tips on Halloween safety and poison prevention. For more information, contact the Nebraska Regional Poison Center by calling 1-800-222-1222.