

UW-Madison: Badger Talks video on how to celebrate Halloween safely

Posted on Tuesday, Oct 20, 2020

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Halloween has enough spooks and scares without worrying about catching a virus. But COVID-19 has added a new frightening element to the holiday. In this Badger Talks video, Malia Jones, an epidemiologist at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, shares how we can safely celebrate Halloween with a few changes to our traditions.

Fortunately, Malia says, trick-or-treating is readily adaptable to an era of physical distancing. Outdoor activities greatly reduce the risk of transmission, so a few changes – like walking only with your own household – can make trick-or-treating fairly safe. Add a proper cloth mask to the costume, and trick-or-treaters should be set.

For households passing out candy, try to find creative ways to keep your distance. Only pass out candy while standing outdoors and consider chutes or grabbers to send candy into children's bags and treat holders. Or, set up grab-and-go packages with a couple pieces of candy each while you wave at kids from inside. To signal your COVID-safe plans, consider adding a yard sign so trick-or-treaters know it's safe to come grab candy.

Other activities, like hosting bonfires, picking apples, or visiting pumpkin patches, are also pandemic-friendly. But skip the indoor costume parties and haunted houses this Halloween – those are far too frightful even for this time of year.