

OCTOBER

Children's Health Tips

brought to you by Sutter Roseville Medical Center



Sutter Roseville Medical Center provides women and children in Placer County advanced medical care in a family-centered environment. Sutter Roseville's renowned Family Birthing Center, which was recently updated and expanded, is the only one in the Sacramento region to receive a five-star rating from the national consumer group HealthGrades. In October 2008, it became the first hospital in Placer County to open a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit for preemies and other babies that need specialized care.



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Sugar: a Halloween Monster of a Different Sort

Not all sugar is bad for you. Healthful fruits and some vegetables contain natural, unrefined sugar. But the refined sugar – found in candy and desserts is a chemical derivative of the natural sweetener found in sugar cane or beets. This processed sugar contains none of the nutritional components of its original form and has no known positive impact on the human body.

Children, at any age, are in the process of developing. Their bodies need foods which are high in nutrition and low in refined sugars.

So, how do you control your kids' intake of sweets this Halloween?

Keep candy out of site and out of mind. Hide the candy stash to reduce sight-induced cravings. Do not let your children keep the candy in their rooms and do not keep it in a big bowl in a common area.

Control rations. Set the rules in advance: let your child know that she or he can only have one (maybe two) pieces each day. Perhaps one serving after a nutritious meal or after completing a chore or homework. Also, limit the overall supply – so that the candy will run out in a couple weeks or less.

Remember that good things come in small packages. Here's one positive thing about the loads of Halloween candy: most of it is "fun-sized." These tiny versions of candy treats help to keep portions under control.

Push the paste. Toothpaste, that is. While dental care is always important, emphasize the need for thorough teeth brushing and flossing whenever there's an abundance of sugary snacks around.

Replace, don't supplement. If your child is consuming a daily serving of candy for a few weeks after Halloween, cut the sugar from other parts of her or his diet. Eat oatmeal instead of sugary cereal. Ban other desserts until the Halloween stash runs out. Replace juice with water.

Educate. Tell your children why you are taking these steps to limit their Halloween candy. Help them understand that candy is a special occasion treat, not part of an average day.

Set the example. Show your kids that you, too, follow the rules and only eat candy on special occasions. They will learn to follow your lead, so be sure to be a healthy role model.

