

# Alcohol, drugs a poor Halloween mix

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(HealthDay)—Alcohol, drugs and Halloween are a bad blend, an ER doctor warns.

"Injuries related to pumpkin carving are more common if persons are intoxicated or under the influence of mood-altering substances. Puncture-type injuries are quite common during Halloween—especially injuries to the [index finger](#)," said Dr. Robert Glatter, an [emergency physician](#) at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City.

Even when you're sober, it's important to take some [safety precautions](#) when carving your jack-o'-lantern. Glatter offers these tips:

- Make sure your carving tools and hands are dry to prevent slipping.
- Consider using specially designed pumpkin-carving tools found online and in specialty shops. "They may be more useful to carve rinds, poke through holes and scoop out the inside of the pumpkin, without being too sharp to cause injury," Glatter said in a hospital news release.
- Carve the pumpkin fully before removing the top so you won't have to put your hand inside and cut near it.

"In general, it is safer to hold the top of the pumpkin and carve with the tip of the blade pointing down to the floor," Glatter said.

Some adults tend to drink to excess on Halloween, which increases their risk of injury, he said.

"The potential for injuries and falls as a result of loose-fitting costumes and special masks or hats which may hamper their ability to walk carefully and hinder their vision, coupled with mood-altering substances is a recipe for injury and harm," Glatter warned.

**More information:** The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [Halloween health and safety](#).

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