

The number one cause of Halloween injuries: Carving the pumpkin

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(HealthDay)—Your Jack-o'-Lantern may be more than scary—it could

be dangerous.

Pumpkin carving is the leading cause of injuries associated with Halloween, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Between October and November 2018 in the United States, 44% of Halloween-linked injuries were connected with [pumpkin](#)-carving activities.

More than one-quarter of Halloween-related injuries included cuts, ingestions and costume, pumpkin or decoration-related injuries, and there were nearly 2,700 injuries involving trips and falls.

"There is a reason Halloween is called 'fright night'—it is, after all, the spookiest night of the year. But there is another interpretation of that term that concerns [orthopedic surgeons](#) in the [emergency department](#): a spike in trauma injuries," said Dr. Craig Phillips. He is an orthopedic hand surgeon and an American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) spokesperson.

"It is important for parents to establish clear boundaries with their kids and teach them safety tips to ensure they have a positive experience, rather than having to visit the hospital," Phillips said in AAOS news release.

When carving your pumpkin, use a carving kit or knives specifically designed for the task, the AAOS advised. Carve pumpkins in a clean, dry and well-lit area, and make sure there is no moisture on the carving tools or your hands.

If someone suffers a cut, apply pressure with a clean cloth and elevate the injured area above the heart. If bleeding does not stop within 10 to

15 minutes or if the cut is deep, you may need to see a doctor, the academy noted. Make sure cuts are cleaned and covered with clean bandages.

Don't put candles in Halloween pumpkins and other decorations. Instead, use non-flammable light sources such as glow sticks or artificial pumpkin lights, the experts suggested.

Before you use a ladder to put up Halloween decorations, check it for loose screws, hinges or rungs. Never place a ladder on uneven ground or flooring. Place the ladder in well-lit areas and make sure there are no tripping hazards, such as loose electrical extension cords across walking paths.

The highest standing level on a stepladder should be two steps down from the top, the AAOS warned. To prevent slipping while on the ladder, be sure that the soles of your shoes are clean and don't wear leather-soled shoes. Always have someone spot you while you're on a ladder and move the [ladder](#) when necessary instead of overreaching.

More information: The National Safety Council offers more [Halloween safety tips](#).

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