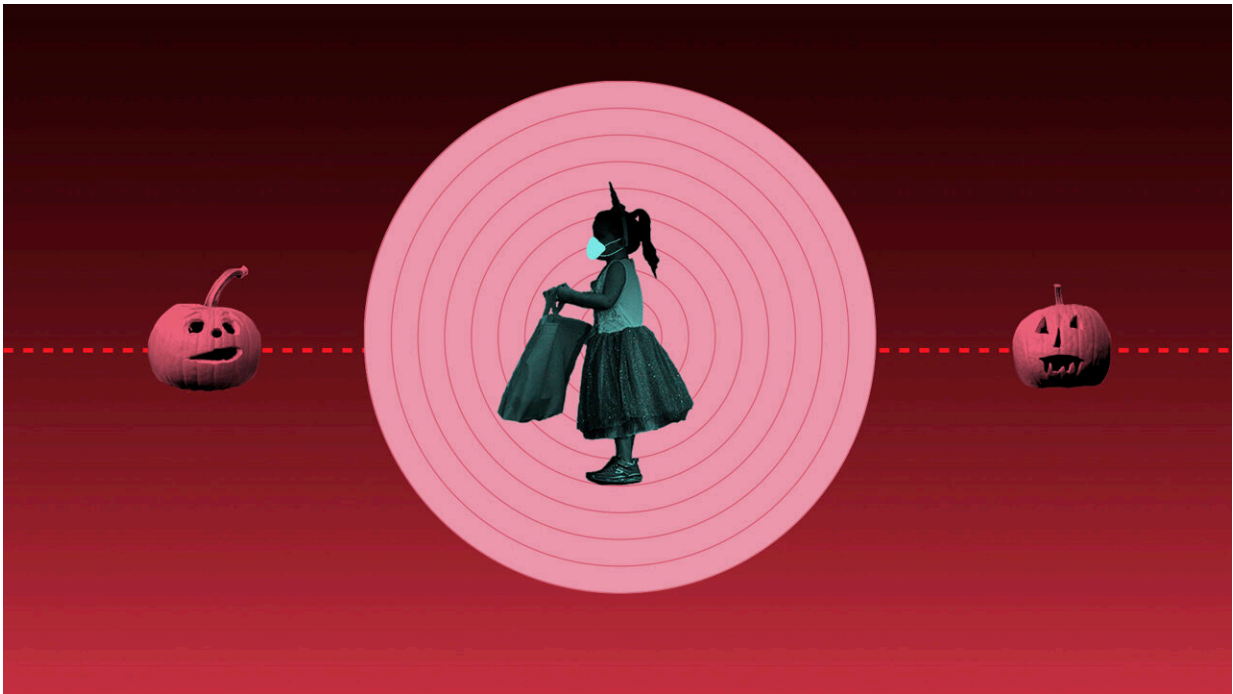


Is it OK to go trick-or-treating during the pandemic?

October 28 2021, by Emma H. Tobin



Is it safe to go trick-or-treating during the pandemic? Credit: AP
Illustration/Peter Hamlin

Is it OK to go trick-or-treating during the pandemic?

It depends on the situation and your comfort level, but there are ways to minimize the risk of infection this Halloween.

Whether you feel comfortable with your children trick-or-treating could depend on factors including how high the COVID-19 transmission rate is in your area and if the people your kids will be exposed to are vaccinated.

But trick-or-treating is an outdoor activity that makes it easy to maintain a physical distance, notes Emily Sickbert-Bennett, an infectious disease expert at the University of North Carolina. To prevent kids crowding in front of doors, she suggests neighbors coordinating to spread out trick-or-treating.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says outdoor activities are safer for the holidays, and to avoid crowded, poorly ventilated spaces. If you attend a party inside, the agency says people who aren't vaccinated—including children who aren't yet eligible for the shots—should wear a well-fitting mask, not just a Halloween costume mask. In areas with high COVID-19 transmission rates, even the fully vaccinated should wear masks inside.

It's generally safe for children to ring doorbells and collect candy, since the coronavirus spreads mainly through respiratory droplets and the risk of infection from [surfaces](#) is considered low. But it's still a good idea to bring along hand sanitizer that kids can use before eating treats.

For adults, having a mask on hand when you open the door to pass out candy is important.

"You probably won't necessarily know until you open the door how many people will be out there, whether they'll be wearing masks, what age they'll be, and how great they'll be at keeping distance from you," Sickbert-Bennett says.

Another option if you want to be extra cautious: Set up candy

bowls away from front doors.

More information: [What's the latest advice on the type of mask I should wear?](#)

[Can I get the flu and COVID-19 vaccines at the same time?](#)

[Can new variants of the coronavirus keep emerging?](#)

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