

Timely Tips for a Spooktacular Smile This Halloween



Halloween need not be a scary time for teeth. Orthodontists want to help you keep your smile bright.

The American Association of Orthodontists (AAO) offers these tips to keep teeth safe from decay, and protect braces, aligners and other orthodontic “appliances” during the Halloween season.

Avoid sticky situations if you are having orthodontic treatment. Say “boo” to hard, sticky, crunchy or chewy candy and snacks such as caramel, gummies, licorice, taffy, bubblegum (even the sugarless kind) and jelly beans. Also steer away from nuts, taco chips and popcorn (especially unpopped kernels).

Tasty alternatives include soft chocolates, peanut butter cups or other melt-in-your-mouth varieties.

If you do indulge in sweets, do so in moderation. Avoid the temptation to grab another handful from the bowl filled with candy. Parents may want to limit the time during which children can eat Halloween candy, whether they are in orthodontic treatment or not.

Brushing and flossing are more important than ever during the Halloween season, when teeth may be more exposed to cavity-causing treats. Orthodontic patients should be especially vigilant about brushing and flossing after eating sugary or starchy foods.

October is National Orthodontic Health Month, celebrated by orthodontists throughout North America. Orthodontists receive an additional two to three years of specialized education beyond dental school to learn the proper way to align and straighten teeth. Only those with this education may call themselves “orthodontists” and only orthodontists may be members of the AAO. For more information about orthodontics or orthodontists, visit mylifemysmile.org.