



## **Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America Explains Potential Halloween Hazards for Kids With Food Allergies**

*Ingredient label loopholes, candy packaging practices and cross-contact with allergens can put children with food allergies at risk for Halloween. The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America releases guides and tools to help parents keep their children with food allergies safe from accidental ingestion and potential severe allergic reactions.*

**October 17, 2019 – Washington, D.C.** – Halloween is typically a time for kids to let their imaginations run wild and have fun with friends but for kids with severe food allergies, trick-or-treating can be difficult and dangerous. Children may accidentally encounter candy that can trigger an allergic reaction. The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) is working to ensure there is greater awareness and proper labeling to prevent allergic reactions.

[U.S. law requires](#) most food labels to list eight major allergens: milk, soy, egg, peanut, tree nut, wheat, fish, and crustacean shellfish. But it is important to note that this law does not regulate or require advisory labels such as “*may contain*” or “*processed in a facility with.*” A [study by the FDA](#) confirmed that chocolates have a high risk of containing milk (a common food allergy in children) even if the label doesn’t declare the presence of milk. Another danger for families to navigate is that there are even a few candies that contain different ingredients or advisory labels in their “mini” size, misleading parents and children alike.

“Halloween should be fun for children and families, but for those with food allergies it can quickly turn into a day full of stress and anxiety,” said Kenneth Mendez, AAFA’s CEO and president. “AAFA hopes that all children are able to experience the best Halloween possible and have helpful resources for a safe and inclusive holiday.”

In advance of Halloween this year, Kids With Food Allergies (KFA) – a division of AAFA – has provided an [allergy-aware Halloween candy guide](#) as well as [label reading tips](#) to help identify safe “regular” and “mini” sized candy options for children allergic to the top eight food allergens. Additionally, be sure to look out for your neighborhood [teal pumpkins](#). Teal is the color of food allergy awareness and teal pumpkins are a sign that those houses are providing non-food treats on Halloween. Items like stickers, bookmarks and other trinkets provide inclusive options for kids on medically-restricted diets.

Not only is AAFA determined to help parents and children find safe options for celebrating Halloween, but the group is working tirelessly with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to implement additional treatments and labelling. The Foundation has asked the FDA to add sesame seeds to its list of major allergens to require more transparent labeling of this growing allergen. AAFA is also working with other groups and organizations on passing the [Food Allergy Safety, Treatment, Education and Research \(FASTER\) Act](#), which will require sesame seed labeling. In July, AAFA responded to the Institute for Clinical and Economic Review’s (ICER) Final Evidence Report which assessed the clinical effectiveness and value of treatments for peanut allergies. In September, AAFA presented data about the burden of living with food allergies to the FDA as it reviewed the Palforzia peanut allergy treatment.

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Asthma and Allergy  
Foundation of America

**About AAFA**

Founded in 1953, AAFA is the oldest and largest non-profit patient organization dedicated to saving lives and reducing the burden of disease for people with asthma, allergies and related conditions through research, education, advocacy and support. AAFA provides practical information and community-based services. Through its Kids With Food Allergies division, AAFA offers the most extensive online support community for families raising children with food allergies. For more information, visit [aafa.org](http://aafa.org) and [kidswithfoodallergies.org](http://kidswithfoodallergies.org).

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