



## October 2011 Edition

### “Halloween” Can Trigger Asthma and Allergies

Halloween candy obviously may contain some hidden food allergens, but there are many more unexpected allergy and asthma triggers that can pose a threat to Trick-or-Treaters, including dusty costumes, fog machines and makeup, according to experts from the *American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI)*.

"When people think of Halloween-associated allergies, they focus on candy and often overlook many other potential triggers," said Dr. Myron Zitt, former ACAAI president in a news release. "By planning ahead, you can ensure not only safe treats, but also safe costumes, makeup, accessories and decorations."

The ACAAI advised parents to be on the lookout for six potential allergy and asthma triggers they may not be expecting, including:

- **Gelatin.** Research published in the *Annals of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology* shows gummy bears and other candies may contain this potential allergen. Parents can have their child tested for specific allergies and develop a food allergy treatment plan. They may also want to have some non-candy treats, such as stickers or small toys, on hand to swap for candy.

- **Nickel.** Costume details and accessories, such as belts, tiaras and swords may contain nickel -- one of the most common causes of allergic contact dermatitis, which can make skin itchy. All items suspected of containing nickel may be tested with a test called **Nickel Alert™** available exclusively from **Allergy Canada**. For those who wish to prevent nickel allergy and for those who have nickel allergy, we carry an extensive line of guaranteed nickel free products.

- **Dust mites.** Old costumes packed away in attics or closets may be filled with dust mites, which trigger asthma and allergies. Parents should either buy or make new costumes or wash old ones before kids put them on. Launder all garments and washable costume accessories with **Allersearch Allergen Wash** to remove dust mites or use **Acaril Additive** for a highly concentrated treatment, effective in all water temperatures.

- **Makeup.** Some types of face and body makeup may include preservatives that may cause allergic reactions. Buying higher quality theater makeup can help avoid this trigger. Also be sure to test the makeup on a small patch of skin before applying it over a larger area of skin at least a few days before Halloween.

Apply **Vanicream Moisturizing Skin Cream** as a foundation base before stepping out into the cold for a round of Trick-or-Treating. This cream is formulated without common chemical irritants such as dyes, perfumes, parabens, while soothing sensitive, inflamed skin. Wash off the makeup with **Free & Clear Liquid Cleanser**, a gentle soap-free cleanser that will not dry the skin. A full line or personal care products is available exclusively at [www.allergycanada.com](http://www.allergycanada.com)

- **Fog.** Real fog or fog machines can trigger asthma in some people.

- **Pumpkins.** Allergies to pumpkins are rare, but they can develop suddenly – especially when they are mouldy or dusty. As a result, pumpkins purchased at a grocery or discount stores are less likely to trigger an allergy. Visit [www.allergycanada.com](http://www.allergycanada.com) for mould control products.



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