

Our Vision: Healthy People in Healthy Communities
Adams, Clay, Nuckolls and Webster Counties

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Say ‘Boo’ to COVID-19: Celebrate Halloween Safely

Hastings, Neb – Say “Boo!” to COVID-19. According to local health officials, Halloween doesn’t need to be cancelled during COVID-19, but there are some safety precautions everyone should know about and put in place.

“Halloween activities can be celebrated safely,” said Michele Bever, executive director for South Heartland District Health Department (SHDHD). “We know what we need to do: avoid crowded places, avoid close contact, and avoid confined spaces,” she said. “Wear a protective mask (not a costume mask), wash your hands, and maintain at least 6 feet distance from people you don’t live with.”

“If you are sick, stay home and don’t prepare or hand out treats,” she said. “Also, consider not participating in activities if you are an older adult or you have underlying health conditions.”

SHDHD shared these Tips for Safe Halloween activities:

Tips for Trick-or-Treating

- Keep trick-or-treat groups to 8 people or less.
- Avoid clustering at doorsteps or anywhere else.
- Remain 6 feet apart from people not in your group.
- Protective masks (not costume masks) should be worn by anyone trick or treating.
- Use hand sanitizer while out.
- Wash your hands when you return home!
- Wait to eat candy once home.
- Focus on safety first. Only visit the neighbors that have safety measures in place!

Handing Out Treats

- Wear a mask.
- Wash your hands before touching treats
- Use hand sanitizer throughout the activity.
- Put the treats in prepackaged bags.
- Hand out treats. Don’t allow kids to reach into treat bowl.
- Get creative with physical distancing... stay on porch and use a PVC chute.
- Mark 6-foot lines in front of home leading to treat spot to prevent bunching of kids.

Trunk or Treat

- Consider a drive thru Trunk-or-Treat event.
- Consider a timed, ticketed event.
- Masks should be worn by anyone at the event.
- Avoid large groups or clustering anywhere—keep groups to no larger than 8.
- Don’t eat candy during the event.
- Use hand sanitizer while trunking and wash your hands when you return home!

Organized Neighborhood Halloween Activities

- Homeowners toss candy from 6 feet away as costumed kids walk safely up and down sidewalks.
- Neighbors set-up curbside with treats as parents drive up with their trick-or-treaters.
- Trick-or-Treat in reverse, as kids in costumes stand in front of their houses and treat bags are provided.
- Neighborhood hosts a costume parade with a predetermined route marked to maintain safe distances between participants. Stay safe with sanitizing stations and 6-foot sidewalk markings with stickers/tape.

Pumpkin Patch

- Wear a mask.
- Sanitize hands before and after touching pumpkins.
- Skip the hayride with strangers.
- Avoid screamers or keep your distance even more.
- If it becomes too crowded, visit a different time.

Halloween Parties

- Choose outdoor gatherings of 8 people or less.

Haunted Houses

- This is extra risky with screaming and being indoors. Wear a mask at all times!!
- Keep 6 feet distance---even when waiting in line.

This Halloween tips summary was created by [Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department](#) and modified by SHDHD. For more tips and ideas for safe Halloween activities, visit these websites: [American Academy of Pediatrics](#), [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), or contact South Heartland District Health Department (877-238-7595).

The [new DHM](#), effective October 21 for Adams, Clay, Nuckolls and Webster counties, is on South Heartland's website. If you are planning Halloween or other activities, check out the current requirements and guidelines for gatherings, and contact SHDHD for assistance in planning a safe event.

South Heartland District case counts and trends can be found on [SHDHD's dashboard](#) of local COVID-19 case statistics. This dashboard, along with updates, guidance, news releases and other COVID-19 information and links can be found on the SHDHD website: www.southheartlandhealth.org. The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) provides daily updates to Nebraska's coronavirus COVID-19 cases on their Data Dashboard at <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Coronavirus>.

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