

B-roll: How does a Teal Pumpkin help with food allergies?

Kids allergic to certain foods can stay safer this season

Contact: jodie.snyder@bannerhealth.com

PHOENIX (Oct. 29, 2018) -- What's teal and can make Halloween easier for kids with food allergies?

The Teal Pumpkin Project, in which participants place teal-colored pumpkins in front of their home, signifying they are giving out items that will be safe for trick or treaters with food allergies, say Banner Health experts.

"Halloween can be a real nightmare for kids with allergies and we want Halloween to be fun for all kids," says Tracey Fejt, RN trauma outreach coordinator for Banner Children's.

If you want to hand out treats that will be safe for children with food allergies, consider giving trick-or-treaters glow sticks, bracelets, or necklaces; pencils, pens, crayons or markers; bubbles; Halloween erasers or pencil toppers or others.

Food allergies is just one of the challenges parents face on Halloween: there's potential for children being hit by vehicles or treated for burns.

"Halloween, we see everything from burns to cuts to kids falling but the big thing is that we have an increase in pedestrian injuries, so many kids are hit by cars on Halloween night," Fejt says.

To protect children against Halloween-related food allergies, parents should think about:

- "Fun size" or miniature candies may have different ingredients or be made on different equipment than the regular size candies, meaning that brands your child previously ate without problems could cause a reaction.
- Always read the ingredient label on treats. Many popular Halloween candies contain some of the most common allergens, such as peanuts or tree nuts, milk, egg, soy or wheat.
- Be aware that even if they are not listed on the ingredient label, candy is at high risk of containing trace amounts of common allergy triggers, because factories often produce many different products.
- Teach your child to politely turn down home-baked items such as cupcakes and brownies, and never to taste or share another child's food.

“ Halloween can be a real nightmare for kids with allergies and we want Halloween to be fun for all kids ”