Use the Halloween news release on allergies and asthma as:

* Material you can distribute to local media (sample cover email below)
* Content to upload to your website and/or newsletter
* Informational flyer for patients/public

**Subject: Halloween Doesn’t Have to be a Fright Fest for Kids with Food Allergies**

Dear [INSERT REPORTER’S NAME]:

“Halloween Mania” starts early for many kids. Beginning just after Halloween the previous year, some children begin planning their costumes for next Halloween. Meanwhile, parents of kids with food allergies begin preparing weeks in advance for how they can keep their kids safe from foods that might be a trigger. Parents want their food-allergic kids to have a great time, while staying safe.

As you plan your Halloween stories, take a look at the press release below which includes tips on how to make sure kids with allergies and asthma are safe, and that they have a good time while trick-or-treating or attending Halloween celebrations.

As a local allergist who specializes in treating allergy and asthma, I would be happy to speak with you about how parents of kids with food allergies can make sure their kids safely enjoy the holiday.

I’m available by phone [INSERT PHONE NUMBER] or e-mail [INSERT EMAIL].

Thank you for your time,

[INSERT NAME]

[INSERT PRACTICE]

**Halloween Doesn’t Have to be a Fright Fest for Kids with Food Allergies**

*Make Halloween safe and fun for kids with food allergies*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**[INSERT YOUR CITY, STATE] [INSERT DATE]**  – Boo! Did we scare you? Every year kids start to get excited at least a month before Halloween. But kids with food allergies also get a bit nervous. They worry they might accidentally eat something they shouldn’t, and suffer a severe allergic reaction.

“Every year Halloween is a bigger celebration,” said allergist [INSERT NAME, INSERT PRACTICE]. “And every year, parents of kids with food allergies have to think about ways to keep their child safe from potential allergic reactions. About 4-6 percent of children in the United States have a food allergy. And while many kids are good at knowing what they’re allergic to, sometimes there are hidden dangers kids and parents need to be aware of.”

These tips will help you navigate the “tricks” that can arise from allergic responses to “treats.”

**Scary, for all the right reasons** – Although Halloween can be all about the candy, try taking the emphasis off food, and putting it on spookiness. Plenty of activities don’t involve food. Scary movies (or not-so-scary ones for younger kids), haunted houses, treasure hunts, mask-making and pumpkin carving or painting are just a few. Some creativity (and Google searching) can help you find fun things to do that don’t involve eating.

**“Witch” treats?** – While you and your child know which foods cause a reaction, sometimes labels aren’t much help. If there’s no label on the candy – which can occur with mini-treats – it’s not safe for your child with [food allergies](http://acaai.org/allergies/types/food-allergies). Tell your kids it’s ok to say “no thank you” to a treat if they know it’s not safe for them. You can drop off treats that are safe for your child with neighbors in advance of trick-or-treating. If you worry your child will be tempted to snack while trick-or-treating, make a special treat sack to avoid the temptation of eating before they get home.

**Hey, that pumpkin isn’t orange!** – Last year, Food Allergy Research & Education began a campaign to encourage awareness of food allergies. They suggest non-food treats and painting a pumpkin teal - the color of food allergy awareness - to place in front of your house. Consider these allergy-safe ideas even if your kids aren’t food-allergic.

**When a food allergy isn’t a food allergy** - If you suspect your child has a food allergy, but you aren’t sure, consult a board-certified allergist. “A food allergy results in specific symptoms (e.g., hives, wheezing, cough, vomiting, etc.) developing within a couple of hours of eating.” said Dr. [INSERT YOUR NAME]. “Without a good history, allergy testing may not be indicated. Positive allergy blood or skin tests alone aren’t enough to make a food allergy diagnosis.  Many more people test positive than will have actual food allergy. This results in people thinking they can’t eat something, when they actually might be able to.”

If you think your child might have a food allergy, make an appointment with an allergist for proper testing. For more information about food allergies, visit [AllergyAndAsthmaRelief.org](http://www.AllergyAndAsthmaRelief.org). [OR INSERT YOUR WEBSITE].

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