

BHS ASSIST E-NEWS

Halloween Safety: Costumes

CPSC Document #100

Many families celebrate Halloween by going door to door, dressed in costumes and collecting candy. Trick-or-Treating creates fond family memories for both children and parents. Unfortunately, for some families, this holiday can result in traumatic injury and even death. To ensure that this Halloween is a fun time for your family rather than a time of crisis, consider the following tips for costumes:

Flame Resistant Costumes

When purchasing a costume, masks, beards, and wigs, look for the label *Flame Resistant*. Although this label does not mean these items won't catch fire, it does indicate the items will resist burning and should extinguish quickly once removed from the ignition source. To minimize the risk of contact with candles or other sources of ignition, avoid costumes made with flimsy materials and outfits with big, baggy sleeves or billowing skirts.

Costume Designs

Purchase or make costumes that are light and bright enough to be clearly visible to motorists.

- For greater visibility during dusk and darkness, decorate or trim costumes with reflective tape that will glow in the beam of a car's headlights. Bags or sacks should also be light colored or decorated with reflective tape. Reflective tape is usually available in hardware, bicycle, and sporting goods stores.
- To easily see and be seen, children should also carry flashlights.
- Costumes should be short enough to prevent children from tripping and falling.
- Children should wear well-fitting, sturdy shoes. A mother's high heels are not good for safe walking.
- Hats and scarves should be tied securely to prevent them from slipping over children's eyes.
- Apply a natural mask of cosmetics rather than have a child wear a loose-fitting mask that might restrict breathing or obscure vision. If a mask is used, however, make sure it fits securely and has eyeholes large enough to allow full vision. Swords, knives, and similar costume accessories should be soft and flexible.



Following these safety tips can ensure a memorable holiday for you and your children. Additional tips can be found through the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Safe at Work: Helping a Co-Worker with an Alcohol or Drug Problem

A safe, healthy and drug-free workplace is everybody's responsibility, and BHS wants to take the opportunity to educate employees about steps they can take to help a co-worker who may have an alcohol or drug problem. By knowing what to do (and what not to do), employees can play a powerful role in improving workplace safety and encouraging those with alcohol or drug problems to seek help.

Most of us know someone, perhaps a family member, friend or co-worker, who has been affected by alcohol or drug abuse in some way. Though some signs may vary by the drug(s) used, what you see the person doing and how you interact with him/her is often the same, regardless of the substance being used. Both on and off the job, symptoms of alcohol or drug use may be physical (chills, smell of alcohol, sweating, weight loss, physical deterioration); emotional (increased aggression, anxiety, burnout, denial, depression, paranoia); and/or behavioral (excessive talking, impaired coordination, irritability, lack of energy, limited attention span, poor motivation). It is important to note, however, that if an employee displays these symptoms, it does not necessarily mean he/she has a substance abuse problem.

Signs that substance use may be a workplace hazard include:

- Creating mishaps, being careless and repeatedly making mistakes.
- Damaging equipment or property.
- Being involved in numerous accidents.
- Displaying careless actions in the operation of hazardous materials or equipment.
- Being unreliable, not being where he or she should be.
- Showing a lack of detail with routine job duties.
- Being unwilling to follow directions and being argumentative.
- Giving elaborate, unbelievable excuses for not fulfilling responsibilities.
- Not carrying one's load.
- Taking unnecessary risks.
- Disregarding safety for self and others.



Employee alcohol and drug use cannot be taken lightly, especially in environments where workers rely on each other for safety.

If you suspect someone has a problem:

- Tell the person you will not hide the problem for him/her. Be willing and able to follow through.
- Explain how the person's behavior affects you and others at work.
- Reconfirm your concern. You do not need to get him/her to admit he/she has a substance problem.

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- Encourage use of the EAP: “Our company’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides confidential assessment, counseling, and referral services as a benefit to employees. You can speak with our designated Care Coordinator by calling BHS at 800-245-1150.”
- Any safety concerns should be discussed with your supervisor, who may have more options through the workplace to help the person get assistance.

10 Important Questions: Help Get the Information You Need to Use Medicines Appropriately

National Council on Patient Information and Education (NCPPIE)

Be sure to ask your doctor, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, and pharmacist these questions whenever medications are part of your treatment plan.

1. What is the name of the medicine and what is it for? Is this the brand name or the generic name?
2. Is a generic version of this medicine available?
3. How and when do I take it - and for how long?
4. What foods, drinks, other medicines, dietary supplements, or activities should I avoid while taking this medicine?
5. When should I expect the medicine to begin to work, and how will I know if it is working? Are there any tests required with this medicine (for example, to check liver or kidney function)?
6. Are there any side effects, what are they, and what do I do if they occur?
7. Will this medicine work safely with the other prescription and non-prescription medicines I am taking? Will it work safely with any dietary/herbal supplements I am taking?
8. Do I need to get a refill? When?
9. How should I store this medicine?
10. Is there any written information available about the medicine? (Is it available in large print or a language other than English?)



Depression

Each year 9.5 percent of adults in the U.S. experience some form of depression. Rates are much higher for individual’s with chronic illness. For example, more than 25 percent with adult onset diabetes and 40-65 percent of those who have had heart attacks are depressed. Depression increases medical risk in many ways, including decreased adherence to treatment and increased likelihood of engaging in health-threatening behaviors such as smoking.

The good news is that depression is a treatable illness. Most individuals respond positively to treatment which may include counseling and medication.