

Spooky and not-so-spooky Halloween treats

WORST

- **CHEWY/STICKY SWEETS**, such as gummy candies, taffy, and even dried fruit can be difficult for children and adults to resist, and even more difficult to remove from teeth. They get stuck in the crevices between teeth, making it nearly impossible for saliva to wash them away.
- **SOUR CANDIES** are highly acidic and can break down tooth enamel quickly. The good news: Saliva slowly helps to restore the natural balance of the acid in the mouth. Wait 30 minutes to brush your teeth after consuming sour/acidic candies; otherwise, you are brushing the acid onto more tooth surfaces and increasing the risk of enamel erosion.
- **SUGARY SNACKS**, including candy corn, cookies, and cake, all contain high amounts of sugar, which can cause tooth decay.

BEST

- **SUGAR-FREE LOLLIPOPS** stimulate saliva, which can help prevent dry mouth that leads to tooth decay.
- **SUGAR-FREE GUM** can actually prevent cavities as it not only dislodges food particles from between the teeth but also increases saliva—which works to neutralize the acids of the mouth and prevent tooth decay.
- **DARK CHOCOLATE AND ITS ANTIOXIDANTS** can be good for the heart and may even lower blood pressure.

As always, monitor your children's candy intake this Halloween and all year round. Kids should be brushing their teeth twice a day for 2 minutes, the Academy recommends.

