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Lifestyle

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How To ... Deal with all the candy

DEAL WITH ALL THE CANDY

It's the anticipation, the costumes, the spooky pageantry, but most of all, Halloween is about the collection and care of a mind-blowing quantity of candy. In the light of day on Nov. 1, we often realize it's a burden to be in possession of 800 small Mr. Goodbars. Here's how to regurgitate all that sugar.

- Before Halloween night is over, sift through the children's candy and "recycle" their discards, putting unloved candy back in your "outgoing" candy bucket. (Or take it all to work.)
- Freeze chocolate in resealable plastic bags. That way it won't take on the flavor of adjacent fruit-flavored candies and will last months for snacking, baking (sub chopped Snickers or Reese's for chocolate chips) or as ice cream toppings. Also, it takes longer to eat a frozen treat than a room-temperature one, so you keep a lid on your children's calorie consumption.
- Tuck hard candies away as decorations for Christmas gingerbread houses, or for birthday pinatas or cake toppers. Or save 25 small but delicious pieces as the star attractions of a homemade holiday Advent calendar.
- Brainstorm with your children: Who in your life is deserving of some sweet love? Pack up some of the candy for a local shelter or charity, surprise your mail carrier or even ship it to deployed military that you might know. (OK, not the chocolate.) The Department of Defense advises against sending general care packages to "Any Service Member," but visit anysoldier.com for other ideas.
- Invent the Candy Fairy. Like the tooth fairy, it's a slick exchange: Instead of a tooth, children leave their candy by the pillow and the fairy deposits cash or a gift

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certificate from a toy store.

- Trade it in. For every 20 pieces of candy they give you, children get to do a favorite activity with the family, such as a movie, bowling or a visit to the park.
- When all else fails, remember the name of the game is damage control. Allow children to choose their favorites on the evening of Halloween, but then put the candy away in a kitchen cupboard. Out of sight can be out of mind, and then it's not squirreled away in a child's room as a constant temptation. Reserve treat times for after meals, and don't forget to brush.

-- St. Petersburg Times

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