



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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October is National Orthodontic Health Month

The Texas Association of Orthodontists celebrates with Candy Buy Back program

El Paso, Texas – October 17, 2016— October is National Orthodontic Health Month and members of the Texas Association of Orthodontics (TAO) invite children across the state to trade in their Halloween Candy for prizes or cash. Simply bring in candy gathered around Halloween to a participating orthodontic office and for every pound of candy, patients receive prizes or cash in exchange.

“With all of the excitement and free candy on Halloween, it is easy to get carried away on a sugar high,” said [Dr. Jesse Teng](#) of El Paso, President of The Texas Association of Orthodontics. “We encourage children across the state of Texas to bring in their Halloween haul to participating orthodontists for a reward.”

“We ask all orthodontic patients to consider the cavity-causing effects and the potential damage to their orthodontic appliances from munching on hard, sugary treats this Halloween” said [Dr. Deji Fashemo](#) of Dallas, President-Elect of the Texas Association of Orthodontists (TAO).

“As an orthodontist, I’m concerned about the effect sugar has on orthodontic appliances,” said [Dr. Kelly Heetland](#) of Wichita Falls, member of the TAO Board. “The candy buyback program is a fun way to incentivize your children to protect their braces this Halloween.”

“We especially want to remind children with braces to be extra cautious about the treats they eat because some varieties can get stuck in between your brackets and damage the devices,” said [Dr. Matthew Ng](#) of Houston, member of the TAO Board.

“Orthodontists care about the overall health of our patients, which is why we are hosting the Candy Buyback program across the state,” said [Dr. Omar Issa](#) of Dallas, member of the TAO Board.

TAO would also like to offer patients and the entire community five timely tips to protect braces, aligners and other orthodontic appliances while protecting teeth from decay this time of year:

1. **Avoid sticky situations with your braces and aligners.** Stay away from hard, sticky, crunchy or chewy candy and snacks. These include caramel, gummies, licorice, taffy, bubblegum (even the sugarless kind) and jelly beans.
2. **Say “boo” to hard treats** - including hard-shelled peanut candies, nuts or nut-filled candies, taco chips and popcorn (especially unpopped kernels). And whether in orthodontic treatment or not, no one should ever chew ice.
3. **Brush up!** Sweets can cause cavities, which means brushing and flossing *are more important than ever during the Halloween season*. Orthodontic patients should be especially vigilant about brushing and flossing after consuming sugary or starchy foods.
4. **Spooktacular news: Not all Halloween candy is off-limits.** Good alternatives include soft chocolates, peanut butter cups or other melt-in-your-mouth varieties, cookies, powdery candy such as Sweet Tarts or Pixie Stix, candy-coated chocolates like M&Ms or nougat filled candies like Three Musketeers. The American Association of Orthodontists even offers orthodontic-friendly recipes for Halloween on its website at mylifemysmile.org/recipes.
5. **Make a commitment to oral health.** Deciding to avoid hard and chewy sweets *before* the Halloween season increases your rate of success – and reduces the likelihood that you’ll break braces.

Sticky candy, such as caramels, fruit chews, and gum should be avoided when wearing braces. Children can trade with their friends and siblings to get only safe candies or, if parents would like to avoid costs and issues associated with candy and orthodontic treatment, they can visit or call their local Orthodontist to find out if they are participating in this year’s buyback. When in doubt, children should ask their parents if a specific candy is safe. Halloween is a fun holiday for children, and having braces or aligners does not have to take away any of the excitement from tasty treats.

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About The Texas Association of Orthodontists

The Texas Association of Orthodontists is a chapter of the American Association of Orthodontists, the world's oldest and largest dental specialty organization. It represents more than 18,000 orthodontist members throughout the United States, Canada and abroad. The Association admits only orthodontists for membership. It encourages and sponsors key research to enable members to provide patients with the highest quality of care, and is committed to educating the public about the need for, and benefits of, orthodontic treatment.