



## Don't let Halloween candy scare you

**Halloween is coming and I never can resist "sampling" the treats we hand out and the leftovers that show up at work the next day. Any advice?**

According to the Census Bureau, Americans eat an average of 25 pounds of candy a year — that's nearly a half-pound a week. That's less than the 27 pounds consumed in 1997, but it's still a hefty amount.

And Halloween seems to start us on that downward spiral of overeating, doesn't it? First it's all that candy. Then a few weeks later is Thanksgiving and mom's pecan pie. A few weeks after that is Christmas and New Year's with all the trimmings. Then there's Super Bowl Sunday and Valentine's Day to further tempt our tastebuds. All of a sudden we've put on a few extra pounds — added to the pounds we put on last year and the year before. How do you get started down the right path?

First, adopt a new attitude. It's easy to fool yourself that you are simply too weak to resist temptation, when in actuality any food you put in your mouth is simply about choices. Make a conscious choice to eat — or not to eat — anything, be it Halloween candy, a doughnut or a bag of potato chips. You're not a victim of

temptation; you're an adult who is making a choice. It's that simple.

Second, know what you're eating. Study the nutrition label or use a search engine like the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Nutrition Database (at <http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/search/>) or Nutrition Data's Nutrition Facts Calorie Counter (at <http://www.nutritiondata.com/>), or even just an old-fashioned calorie-counter book. Look up what you're considering eating. You'll find that one serving of Almond Joy Bites, for example, contains 218 calories, but that a "serving size" equals 18 pieces. That means if you choose to eat only two pieces, you've cut your calorie consumption down to 25 calories.

Third, don't put yourself in a position to have to make difficult choices. Buying Halloween candy? Choose a type that you personally don't like. Afraid of the treats in the snack room at work? Don't enter the room. And make sure you fill up on a healthful, balanced diet — a full stomach is often the easiest way to help us make the right choices.

*Chow Line is a service of Ohio State University Extension and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center. Send questions to Chow Line, c/o Martha Filipic, 2021 Coffey Road, Columbus, OH 43210-1044, or [filipic.3@osu.edu](mailto:filipic.3@osu.edu).*



**For the week of  
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