Five SPOOKY Issues for your Facility during Halloween

Something wicked this way comes¹... Is your facility ready?

In the recent years, the celebrations for Halloween have been intensified. More people participate in the festivities and as such, more people are vulnerable to the dangers of the holiday. A well-prepared organization is able to avoid chaos and even participate in the festivities. Be ready for the bizarre, the unexpected and the ghostly.

Double, double toil and trouble; Fire burn and cauldron bubble²

Here are the Five SPOOKY Issues for your Facility during Halloween:
1. Bugs and Hisses - *Shift Coverage*

✧ **Keep Calm & Carry a Wand**

Finding coverage for shifts on the eve or on the day of Halloween. The weekend before Halloween might be an issue as well.

✧ **Give 'em Pumpkin to Talk About**

Having a “sudden illness” or “no show” for the days around Halloween

2. Halloween Boo-Boos - *Increase in Halloween related Injuries*

✧ **Car Accidents during Treat-or-Trick**

Children are 4 times more likely to be struck by cars on Halloween than on other nights[^3]

✧ **Slip and Fall**

Leaves, rain or snow can create slippery conditions. Even in good weather, being out after sundown on unfamiliar paths can be enough to increase the fall incidence. Oversized or unbalanced costumes, masks and makeup can make navigating the Halloween night a harrowing affair.

✧ **Pumpkin Carving Injuries**

Most common injuries are minor cuts and lacerations on the non-dominant hand.
Costumes Gone Wrong

I. Those Hives are NOT part of my Costume
   Allergic Reaction to costume material or make up

II. Spooky Eyes
   Eye Injuries due to novelty contact lenses or glitter makeup

III. Burn Jack-o-Lantern Burn
   Fake beards, spider webs, fairy wings and all those nylon costumes are flammable. The danger intensifies when real candles are used inside Jack-o-Lanterns or as Halloween decorations.

IV. Peek-a-Boo
   The patients’ costumes may obscure Injuries or Symptoms. For example heavy makeup can hide pale, hypoxic or jaundice skin. The medical staff needs to navigate behind the fake blood or the bulky costumes to uncover signs, symptoms and locations of injuries.

No Tricks, just Treats!

I. Spookilicious
   Food Allergies are a concern since the desire to eat candy sometimes overpowers caution. Overeating, usually candy, can cause upset belly and sickness.

II. I am Here for the Boos
   Holidays is a common time for alcohol abuse, either intentional or accidental. Overconsumption of alcohol has many ramifications such as fights that lead to injuries, alcohol poisoning and patients who are unpleasant and don’t cooperate

III. I’m Totally Ghoul
   Taking drugs to “celebrate” Halloween can lead to overdose or behavioral issues. Also, as marijuana edibles become more commonplace, be vigilant for accidental ingestion.
3. **Come to the Dark Side we have Pumpkin and Spice - Volume Increase**

All those Halloween Boo-Boos increase the patient volume for all healthcare facilities.

Arm your staff with patience (for all those spooked parents that think the red puke is blood and not candy) and vigilance for what might crawl through your doors.

4. **Be SPOOK-tacular - Inappropriate Staff Costumes for Halloween**

Death, Vampire, Devil, Zombie etc., medical professionals have a great sense of humor; however, some patients might not appreciate it in their time of need.

In addition, costumes should not prohibit the individual or their team, from performing their job tasks.
5. **Creep it Real – Celebrate**

Allow the staff who want to participate in the celebration an opportunity to do so.

Small decorations, treats and sensible costumes will provide a note of celebration to all staff, patients and visitors.

Be prepared,

keep the **six Cs** in mind: **Cars, Cocktails, Carvings, Costumes, Candy and Candles**

and have a **Happy Halloween**

Halloween woos not your brew? Let AB Med help... **contact us**

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**References**

1. William Shakespeare from "Macbeth"

2. William Shakespeare from "Macbeth"