

# Adults the silent victims of Halloween

I remember Oct. 31 vividly from my "Trick or Treating" days. Growing up in a family of three brothers there was always a competition to see who could bring home the most candy.

I came from a household that didn't have sugar cereals and the treat of the week was to have an "After Eight" on a Friday night. What a contrast to the virtual mountain of candy that we sorted on the family room floor after a full night of scavenging the neighborhood. It seemed almost inconceivable that my parents let us decide how much to consume. We over indulged on our favorite treats for the next few days but then surprisingly lost interest. Somehow having so much of the "forbidden fruit" at our finger tips loosened it's magical hold over us. By early November Halloween was a distant memory in the shadow of emerging Christmas decorations and parades.



**HEIDI SMITH**

**NUTRITION FOR THE LONG RUN**

Should we be concerned with the amount of candy our kids will eat at Halloween? Every child and family is unique in how they choose to approach Halloween. You must find a way that suits the personalities and needs of your kids. A few standard practices should include checking the safety of candy before your children eat it and of course encourage they brush their teeth after each candy "installment".

As a mother of a pre-schooler, I'm less concerned with my son's consumption of Halloween candy and more concerned with my own will power. I think adults are the silent victims of Halloween. Most children still have their innate ability to eat when they are hungry and stop when they are full. Most children lose interest in the candy soon after Oct. 31.

It is often the parents who seem to be drawn to the "top cupboard" or secret hiding place to "get rid" of the Halloween excess. Many people have learned over the years that if they buy the "good treats" they often don't make it to the door by Oct. 31. A helpful strategy if you are one of the "Tempted" is to buy a type of candy you do not like. Or better yet, give out another kind of treat such as stickers or Halloween pencils.

Of course you run the risk of being

labeled the "lame house" on the block. Word travels fast amongst the experienced treaters. Some healthier treats that still hold some clout include snack size bags of microwave popcorn, Fruit-to-Go fruit leathers, pretzels, licorice, Body Smart fruit chews and raisin boxes.

If you decide to go for the popular chocolate and chips, consider buying half of what you think you need. If you run out early, simply turn off the porch light and settle into the couch for a restful evening. The kids won't miss the extra loot and you won't be haunted by the deep recesses of the kitchen cupboards.

*• Heidi Smith is a Registered Dietitian working out of the Health and Performance Centre at the University of Guelph. She is the author of the book "Nutrition for the Long Run".*



**ELLIE  
ADVICE**

## Comparing frequency of sex pointless

**Q: I married three months ago. We're a happy couple, and love each other. Since marrying, we only have sex once a week, sometimes once every two weeks, recently, once that month! I don't know how normal this is, it's the first time I'm sexually active due to my religion and culture. Some friends talk as if they have sex with their husbands almost everyday and that upsets me, though I don't think they're being honest. I've talked about it twice with my husband, at first there was more passion but later, it's the same. I really look forward to having sex with him. - A beginner**

**A:** Comparing sex calendars with friends is like asking their income — the answers will be inflated. What matters isn't someone else's "normal," but satisfying both partners. Some newly-marrieds feel the weight of their new responsibilities, work harder, worry about bills, push to get ahead. This may be affecting your husband; or he may have his parents' tapes playing in his head about how married couples are supposed to live. Next conversation, talk about your love, not sex. Make time for cuddling, and show your feelings without always having bed as the goal.

Take the pressure off him, add more pleasure time together, and tell him how much you like being intimate with him in many ways.

These are early days so give him time. If it persists, insist he see a doctor and explore if something is holding him back.

**Q: I'm a male, 38, who hasn't been in a longterm relationship since the 80s. I was often broke and wanted to establish a solid career first. I resisted marriage a few times because I couldn't provide for a family.**

**A:** Now I've achieved my career goals but I've lost basic dating skills. I have close female friends, who consider me attractive, physically and otherwise, but have no interest in me.

**I'm open to being set-up, but they either think their friends are "not your type" or they're uncomfortable to introduce me.**

**I've asked women out, tried dating services, and speed dating. Inevitably I crash n' burn, sulk awhile, then give it another try. - Dateless and sick of it**

**A:** Stop dating. That doesn't mean stop getting to know people, nor stop improving your social skills.

Join groups...anything from art classes to salsa dancing to walking tours.

Chat to people of all ages and backgrounds, as friends. Ask about their lives and interests.

Arrange social gatherings - coffee chats, dinner, a movie.

I predict that in a busier, sociable life that focuses on friendships without the self-analysis and dating angst, you'll find yourself alongside someone who becomes your companion.

*• Write to Ellie Teshler in care of The Record or The Guelph Mercury; e-mail to [ellie@therecord.com](mailto:ellie@therecord.com) or [ellie@guelph-mercury.com](mailto:ellie@guelph-mercury.com).*



### KIDS HELPING KIDS

Alex, 6, Teagan, 5, Rebecca, 6, and Kid's Help Phone student ambassador, Tiffany, 16, show off Boston Pizza's new Kids' Club Card, being launched by Boston Pizza and Rogers Video outlets as part of a national fundraiser to raise \$60,000 for Kids' Help Phone in November.

CANADIAN PRESS

## Measuring the risk of cholesterol-lowering drugs

A picture is often worth a thousand words. One recently caught my eye. The picture shows a small plane circling a huge active volcano. A passenger says, "Let's take a closer look at the volcanic crater". The pilot replies, "We can't, it's not worth the risk". And a recent report similarly questions whether the mass consumption of cholesterol-lowering drugs (CLDs) is worth the risk.

Dr. Jim Wright is Director of The Therapeutic Initiative. It's a British Columbia organization that aids doctors in evaluating drugs. It concluded that cholesterol-lowering drugs may be doing more harm than good in the attempt to prevent heart attack.

After studying five clinical trials of CLDs, Wright writes that they only decreased the risk of heart attack and stroke by a mere 1.4 per cent over a three-to-five year period.

He adds that "If I were a physician I would have to treat 71 people with CLDs for one to benefit". Moreover, he expressed concern that cholesterol-lowering drugs may have increased other health problems such as cancer and psychiatric troubles.

This is not the first time researchers have questioned the use of cholesterol-lowering drugs. In 1990 the British Medical Journal published a study involving



**DR. W. GIFFORD-JONES**

**THE DOCTOR GAME**

25,000 men. Half of these men had lowered their blood cholesterol primarily with drugs.

The result? The men using drug therapy had 28 fewer heart attacks than the other group without this medication. But the benefit was offset by 29 additional violent deaths such as accidents, suicides and homicides.

Later that year the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute reviewed all the data on cholesterol blood levels and mortality rates. They reported their findings in the Journal Circulation. (A publication of the American Medical Association), after analyzing 19 studies.

Their findings showed that high blood cholesterol levels were associated with an increased risk of heart disease, at least in men. But low blood chole-

sterol levels in both men and women showed a 40 per cent greater risk of death from non-cardiac causes such as violent death, lung disease and some cancers.

In an editorial accompanying this report Dr. Stephen Hulley, of the University of California at San Francisco, strongly recommended that CLDs should not be used except in patients who already showed signs of heart disease. Then in July 1992, the Archives of Internal Medicine reported on a study involving 351,000 men. This showed that low cholesterol levels were associated with increased risk of hemorrhagic stroke, liver disease, pancreatic cancer, digestive disease, cirrhosis of the liver and alcoholism.

For years I have questioned the widespread use of cholesterol-lowering drugs. There is no doubt that the general consensus among doctors is that CLDs drugs save lives. So my doubts are not shared by many others.

So why am I so reluctant to climb aboard this bandwagon that touts the cardiovascular benefits of CLDs? For one thing I don't believe you can totally ignore the studies that show adverse side-effects. After all, it's well known CLDs can damage liver and kidneys and that patients have died from their use.

That's a big price to pay.

I'm also a great believer in the use of common sense. Today some authorities claim it's important to push blood cholesterol levels even lower using CLDs. In effect, they say if low cholesterol is good for you an even lower one is better. This reasoning worries me as cholesterol is an essential nutrient for repairing cell membranes that manufacture vitamin D and produce hormones such as estrogen and testosterone.

The economics of CLDs also concerns me. Money drives many things and it's had a huge impact on CLDs. Massive amounts of money are spent on their promotion because great profit is made from the sale of CLDs. Moreover, much of the research has been paid by the pharmaceutical industry and he who pays the piper often calls the tune.

All this has created a nation of cholesterol phobias. People talk about the reduction of cholesterol numbers as if they were searching for the holy grail.

Since I'm not related to the Almighty I may be terribly wrong. But I believe history will show that the level of blood cholesterol is not the primary culprit it's made out to be.

*• Dr. Gifford-Jones's column runs on Thursdays.*

## Horoscope

### Forecast for Friday, Oct. 31, 2003

By JACQUELINE BIGAR

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY** for Friday, Oct. 31, 2003:

You have a special birthday this year, when you can realize your hopes and desires. Expand your circle of friends, and network. What might be key is knowing what you want so that you can create just that. Others find you to be unusual, mysterious and very attractive. You are capable of pulling white rabbits out of black hats.

**ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19)**

What you thought was a possibility could happen. Mind your p's and q's carefully, because somehow your mind drifts from topic to topic later on, especially with the Halloween giggles that appear left and right during the day. Tonight: Launch into the nearest Halloween party.

**TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)**

Take a firm stand in the morning, when others seem to be going gaga and a little silly. The Halloween atmosphere goes through your day, permitting many happenings. Tonight: A must party.

**GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)**

You might want to take off early and get into the Halloween spirit, whether that means dressing up a Halloween urchin or two, or being a Halloween urchin yourself. Go off the beaten track, even in your thinking. Tonight: Go way out of your way for a loved one.

**CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)**

Deal with someone directly. News comes directly from partners who might have a slightly different way of handling a personal matter. You might want to verify what you are hearing. Tonight: Play trick or treat with your favorite person.

**LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)**

Some of you, if possible, might opt to call in and make the best of the present miniholiday, as you enjoy all the witches and goblins who head your way. Y Tonight: The action is at your pad.

**VIRGO (AUG.23-SEPT. 22)**

The workload drops on you. Don't worry so much about everything, and don't take offense. Understand that you are trusted. On the other hand, you want to have a good time as well. Tonight: Put your feet up.

**LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)**

Your spirit emerges when you least expect it. You like fun like Halloween, and you get into the mood whether you are a child or adult. Enjoy the fun and games that surround the day. Tonight: Play into the scenario.

**SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)**

You might decide today that you would like to

stay at home. Someone comes to you with special feelings. How you decide to handle this and what goes on might be a different scenario. Tonight: Greet your favorite witches and devils!

**SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)**

You find the atmosphere to be most fun. Not everything runs as you think or want it to. Get into the moment and let down your hair. Keep a secret just that. Tonight: Play trick or treat, if you want.

**CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)**

Keep aiming for more rather than less. You will find that you inspire others to a new and higher level. Tonight: Your treat.

**AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)**

Deal with others directly. Your caring comes out with someone who needs a lot of feedback. It's not only your words that count, but also how you say them. Tonight: As you like it.

**PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)**

Slow down, even if someone close might be encouraging you to hurry up. You find the answers by detaching. Not everything needs to be perfect, nor is it likely to be. Tonight: If you can, vanish like a ghost!

**BORN TODAY**

TV journalist Jane Pauley (1950), TV journalist Dan Rather (1931), comedian John Candy (1950)

*• Jacqueline Bigar is on the Internet at <http://www.jacquelinebigar.com>.*

**TONIGHT! K-W SYMPHONY POPS** October 30  
Frigh Night  
8:00 pm A \$40 / B \$36 / eyeGO ... - Main Stage  
**James Gordon's HARDSCRABBLE ROAD** Oct. 30, 31 & Nov. 1  
A Folk Opera About the Needy and Greedy-World Premier!  
October 30-2 & 8 pm, October 30, 31 & November 1-8 pm  
Tickets \$20 / eyeGO-Co-operators Hall  
**LIGHTHOUSE** November 7  
One of Canada's Most Popular Bands!  
8:00 pm Adult \$25 / Student & Senior \$23 / eyeGO ... - Main Stage  
**KITCHENER-WATERLOO SYMPHONY** November 14  
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8:00 pm A \$40 / B \$36 / eyeGO ... - Main Stage  
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