



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Halloween Costume Safety Tips for Your Eyes

(Honolulu, Hawaii), October 9, 2013 – This Halloween, an estimated 158 million Americans plan to celebrate the holiday by spending nearly \$2.6 billion on costumes alone, according to the National Retail Federation. But all the fun of dressing up can end up affecting your vision. Makeup, decorative contact lenses and props have the potential to cause temporary discomfort and even long-term damage to your eyes.

“Kids and adults enjoy dressing up for Halloween, but they sometimes don’t think about the things they choose to put in and around their eyes,” said Dr. Christopher Tortora, M.D., medical director of the Hawaiian Eye Center and Dry Eye Clinic. “It’s a good idea to take simple precautions by reading labels and doing a little research.”

Makeup and face paint are common staples of almost any costume, and it’s important to be careful when using them around your eyes. The Food and Drug Administration advises consumers to look closely at packaging to make sure it states that the product is hypoallergenic and that any color additives are FDA-approved for use on or near the eyes (list found [here](#)). If any makeup or face paint does get into your eyes, flush out with cool water.

Decorative, nonprescription contacts are also very popular choices during Halloween, but experts do not recommend using them unless they are prescribed by an eye care professional. Contacts from anywhere other than a licensed eye care professional — like party supply and costume stores — may contain low quality plastic and toxic dyes that can be very dangerous.

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Both prescription and non-prescription (colored, scary effects for Halloween, etc.) contacts should only be purchased through an eye care specialist. This is necessary because not all eyes are the same and contacts need to be properly fitted and properly cleaned and used to prevent serious infections. Contact lens related eye infections can be very serious and lead to blindness. A specialist will make sure to provide you with the necessary instructions for use and care.

The last thing every costume needs is a good accessory, but steer clear of any props that are sharp and pointed — especially for children. All props should be made of soft or flexible materials to help decrease the risk of accidents. Watch out for sharp edges on masks and hats.

Good visibility while in costume is another important safety factor to keep in mind. Masks, hats and other accessories should fit so they don't block your vision. If trick-or-treating at night, use flashers or reflective tape on costumes so passing motorists can see you.

Eye injuries that are persistent or appear to be serious should be seen by a doctor immediately. Taking a few precautions to help minimize irritating or damaging your eyes can make your Halloween safe and fun.

Dr. Christopher Tortora, a board certified ophthalmologist, is host of "The Hawaiian Eye Show," a weekly informational radio program about healthy vision. He and his colleagues at the Hawaiian Eye Center are committed to educating the public about the importance of preventative eye care. To learn more about a variety of eye health issues, please call the Hawaiian Eye Center at 621-8448 or visit www.HawaiianEye.com and www.Facebook.com/HawaiianEyeCenter, where "life has never looked better."

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