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Halloween sugar, food additives and the commercialization of holidays

by Mike Adams

This year at the annual sugar-and-food-additives fest for children called "Halloween," I think parents should skip the middle step of handing out candy and just hand out Ritalin directly to the kids. I say this in jest, of course, since I am adamantly against the use of Ritalin in children, but let's be crystal clear about one thing that's different from last year's Halloween: This year, **we have scientific evidence that artificial colors cause hyperactivity in children.**

The evidence I'm talking about is, of course, the study recently conducted in the U.K. at the University of Southampton and published in *The Lancet* which establishes a strong correlation between the ingestion of artificial food colors and [hyperactivity](#) (which is eventually diagnosed as "ADHD"). The study was actually funded by the Food Standards Agency (FSA), which is the British version of [the FDA](#) except that it's not run by criminals. When the FSA study revealed the extent of the behavioral disorders caused in children by these [food additives](#) (which include sodium benzoate), the U.K. press went into a feeding frenzy over the issue and now the FDA is pressuring food manufacturers to remove the additives from the national food supply.

Back in the USA, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration seems to have heard nothing about this issue. It's doing nothing to protect children from such food additives and, in fact, appears to be taking a position that pretends the Southampton research never took place at all. There's nothing quite like burying your head in the sand when it comes to running the food and drug industry in the [United States](#), is there?

Check out my bulging [sugar sack](#)...

So now [Halloween](#) arrives, and guess what? Tens of millions of children are running around the streets of the United States, tramping door to door with crinkled paper sacks and noisy plastic bags, dressed like the walking dead and begging for [candy](#). Ever wonder what's in the candy, exactly?

Virtually ALL of the Halloween candy being given away to children on this bizarre holiday is made of these three primary ingredients:

SUGAR (sucrose, [corn syrup](#) or high-fructose [corn](#) syrup)
COLOR (chemical food coloring additives, including the ones that cause ADHD)
FLAVOR (artificial chemical flavors)

Slap a blob of this nutritious mixture into a plastic wrapper, stamp a fun-looking logo on the outside, and you've got candy!

If you want to manufacture a different kind of candy, simply change the chemicals you're using to have a "bubble gum" flavor or a "tangy" color. My favorite example of Halloween candy? The dreaded **candy corns**. They contain virtually nothing other than corn syrup and [artificial colors](#).

A holiday that's fitting for the most obese nation in the world

Every Halloween, I stare in astonishment at the scene playing out in front of my eyes. I'm not astonished at the children, mind you: They're just doing what they've been taught to do by television advertisements and peer pressure. I'm more astonished at the [parents](#) who waddle down wide suburban streets, diabetic and obese, rallying their children to ring yet another doorbell and cash in on the windfall of candy profits made possible by the mass commercialization of the holiday by candy manufacturers. Some of these [overweight](#) parents are so out of shape, they can barely huff their way through a four-block neighborhood before needing to head back home for their nightly insulin shot. The irony of it all goes utterly unnoticed by virtually everyone.

Ahh, it's a moment to savor. Take it all in as you watch children dressed like dead or diseased adults rushing

door to door, gulping down the very products that will lead them to both disease and death. The United States of [America](#) is the most obese nation in the world, having achieved a whopping 66% rate of overweight and an unprecedented 34% rate of obesity among adults. Diabetes is rampant among both adults and children, and massive sugar intake only accelerates the development of the disease.

Halloween, my dear friends, is the big kick-off of a season of massive caloric intake where we gulp our way through Thanksgiving, [Christmas](#) and Near Year's, treated by an endless buffet of sugars, chemical additives, [processed food](#) and saturated fats. If processed food made people smart, America would be the land of sheer genius.

But, alas, it seems to have the opposite effect. And from now through January, we will all get to witness [free market](#) gluttony at its best: Commercially-driven caloric consumption sponsored by Kraft, or Pepsi, or Snickers or practically any food or beverage manufacturer you can imagine. They're all in this together, and in order for them to profit over the next quarter, consumers have to CONSUME! All the food, candy and sodas that are going to be consumed over the next several [holidays](#) have already been made in a factory, stored in a warehouse, shipped on a truck and loaded onto store shelves, just waiting for hungry, gullible consumers to come along and shovel down their own share of processed food additives and refined sugar derivatives.

There's a kind of sick beauty in the whole thing. I'm always struck by the idea that we must actually be the wealthiest people in the world, because we have so much "food" around here that people are actually just giving it away for free. Children can collect enough candy in one evening to roll around in it on the living room floor, bartering their boring candy corns for something good like Skittles (yet another form of sugar and artificial color additives). Our free market economy has worked wonders. Truly; it's amazing! We have mastered the economics of delivering nutritionally devoid calories to a nutritionally ignorant population, and we've even managed to wrap Holidays around the whole consumption racket, forever imprinting each subsequent generation of children with the belief that Halloween = Candy, Thanksgiving = Turkey and Christmas = Cookies.

This holiday season, be amazed. Look around at what's happening with the eyes of a visitor from outer space (someone who has no knowledge of our bizarre customs and holidays). Then ask yourself: What the heck is behind all this?

The answer, of course, is the same thing that's behind everything else in this country, from politics to medicine: **The Corporation**. Halloween is big business. So is Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's and every other holiday. I only hope that you, as a skeptical consumer, join me in celebrating these holidays for their true, non-commercial purposes, and avoid being suckered into spending your money on candies and trinkets that have no real purpose other than to enrich the commercial entities that have essentially hijacked our sacred holidays and turned them into mass consumer stampedes towards disease and bankruptcy.

What am I giving out this Halloween? Amazon Herb capsules. Let the parents try to figure that one out... (They'll ignore all the sugary chemical candies, open the herbs, and ask themselves, "Gee, are these safe?")

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