



GENERIC NAME: CHARCOAL, ACTIVATED

BRAND NAME: Charcoal, Actidose-Aqua

CLASS: Adsorbent, Gastrointestinal agent

Mechanism of Action:

Pharmacological:

Physical binding (adsorption) of poisons from GI tract.

Clinical effects:

Prevents/reduces systemic absorption of poisons.

Indications and Field Use:

Sole prehospital therapy of oral ingestion of poisons Pre-lavage of oral ingestions of poison substances

Contraindications:

Ingestion of caustics (risk of gastrointestinal hemorrhage)
Ingestion of hydrocarbons (relative) Oral administration to comatose patient Simultaneous administration of other oral

drugs

Absence of bowel sounds Gastrointestinal perforation
Intestinal obstruction Recent surgery

Adverse Reactions:

May provoke vomiting, diarrhea and constipation May worsen overdosed induced Ileus Pulmonary aspiration Fecal discoloration (black)

Acute pancreatitis

NOTES ON ADMINISTRATION

Incompatibilities/Drug Interactions:

Ineffective for iron, lithium, heavy metals, and other ions May reduce the effectiveness of other treatments (Mucomyst) in pure acetaminophen OD's. Since charcoal bonds with whatever it is mixed with, flavoring with drinks reduces effectiveness.

Adult Dosage:

50-100 Gm (1-2 Gm/kg) as a single initial dose; if not in pre-mixed slurry, mix one part charcoal with four parts water.

Pediatric Dosage:

0.5 -1 Gm/kg; if not in pre-mixed slurry, mix one part charcoal with four parts water.

Routes of Administration: Oral (po), nasogastric tube (ng), orogastric (og)

Onset of Action:

Immediate

Peak Effects:

Not applicable

Duration of Action:

Dependent upon GI function; acts until excreted

Dosage Forms/Packaging:

Powder Pre-mixed slurries of 15, 25, and 50 Gms Pre-mixed tubes of 25 Gms

Arizona Drug Box Supply:

PARAMEDIC: Optional 50 gm.

Special Notes:

> Charcoal mixture *should not* contain sorbitol; *carefully* read label of exchange supply.