

# Activated Charcoal is Very Popular Right Now – Here's Why

Activated charcoal is expanding into a whole new market. It's used in water filtration, as poison control, and in herbal medicine regularly, but it's increasingly showing up in health and beauty care products. So what is activated charcoal, and why are people suddenly rubbing it all over their teeth?

## How is Activated Charcoal Different than Actual Charcoal?

Let's get the biggest issue out of the way. Activated charcoal (also known as activated carbon) is almost but not quite the same thing as actual charcoal (the stuff used for summer grilling). The bulk material used to produce activated charcoal is some combination of bone char, coconut shells, peat, petroleum coke, coal, olive pits, and/or sawdust, while actual charcoal can include all of that plus agricultural waste and other dry biomass.

To create activated charcoal, carbon is heated to temperatures of 1,700 to 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit with steam or air in an oxygen-free environment, although wood-based activated charcoals frequently endure a chemical process that includes heat and phosphoric acid as well. The high heat "activates" the charcoal, removing the carbon's volatile compounds and enlarging its internal pores. These enlarged internal pores allow the now activated charcoal to chemically attract and bind contaminants like chlorine, PCBs, industrial solvents, and pesticides, among others.

**Related: *How to Eliminate IBS, IBD, Leaky Gut***

## **How It Works**

When it's activated, charcoal acquires a positive charge. This is how the activated charcoal captures nasty stuff in our bodies and the water supply. Chlorine, for example, is being replaced in the water disinfection process by chloramine, a chemical that can form trihalomethanes, which in turn can cause cancer. Since that chemical is negatively charged, positively charged activated charcoal is a cost-effective and safe way to improve the quality of the water we use every day. But people also ingest it.

## **Here's What to Take Activated Charcoal For**

Activated charcoal is recommended for accidental poisonings and certain drug overdoses. It's also effective in pulling out harmful mercury and aluminum preservatives found in dental amalgams or vaccines and arsenic from rice and other foods. It's been associated with lower cholesterol, anti-aging properties, better kidney and liver function, and helps relieve gas and bloating by attracting disruptive digestive byproducts.

In personal care products, activated charcoal attracts many of the dirt and oils that can irritate and increase the likelihood of acne, eczema, dry skin, and other topical infections. Bad breath or body odor often occurs when toxins are exiting the body, and activated charcoal can help quickly remove those toxins.

**Related: *Diatomaceous Earth – Mother Nature's Secret Weapon: What Is It, How to Use It, Where to Find It***

# The Forms of Activated Charcoal

Adding activated charcoal to your diet is not a pleasant undertaking. You're eating ashes and it tastes about as appetizing as you'd imagine. Due to this, most activated charcoal supplements come in pill form. But activated charcoal is also invading other areas. Activated charcoal can now be found in:

- Shampoo
- Facial sponges and towelettes
- Lattes
- Toothpaste, tooth powders, and toothbrushes
- Soap
- Ice cream
- Skin cleansers

## Hoax or Harmless?

Activated charcoal is considered harmless, but there are a few things to consider if you're interested in trying it. Don't take activated charcoal with prescription medications and constipation, as the charcoal will exacerbate the issue. It can also cause black stools. The type of raw material used to make your activated charcoal also matters, with charcoal derived from coconut shells generally labeled the highest quality.

## The Bottom Line

If we continue to treat the planet as we have been, the amounts of heavy metals, pesticides, and chemicals in our bodies will continue to rise through environmental exposure. Activated charcoal makes the case that we have a solution to at least one aspect of that. If exposure cannot be prevented, then regularly cleansing the body of heavy metals can prevent the kind of buildup that leads to scarier and more serious

health concerns.

### **Related Reading:**

- *Diatomaceous Earth – Mother Nature’s Secret Weapon: What Is It, How to Use It, Where to Find It*
- *Detox Cheap and Easy Without Fasting – Recipes Included*
- *How To Detoxify and Heal From Vaccinations – For Adults and Children*
- *Mercury Fillings, Root Canals, Cavitations – What You Need to Know*

### **Related Products:**

- Activated Charcoal • 100c – Integrative Therapeutics
- Shillington’s Total Draw Poultice Powder
- Shillington’s Intestinal Detox

### **Sources:**

- *How to Make Activated Charcoal at Home* – [buyactivatedcharcoal.com](http://buyactivatedcharcoal.com)
- *Frequently Asked Questions* – [generalcarbon.com](http://generalcarbon.com)
- *The Difference Between Activated Charcoal & Charcoal Briquettes* – [leaf.tv](http://leaf.tv)
- *What is Activated Charcoal and Why is it Used in Filters?* – How Stuff Works
- *Filtration: Sediment, Activated Carbon and Mixed Media* – North Dakota State University