

Top 7 Activated Charcoal Uses & Benefits

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Every prepper should already be fairly well acquainted with the many uses of charcoal--and most of us probably know how to make it ourselves from a few charred logs.

However, there is another type of charcoal out there that might actually take the cake in terms of survival utility and gear us towards a different approach altogether. We are of course talking about activated charcoal.

Activated charcoal, also known as activated carbon, is essentially charcoal which has then been subjected to further chemical process which strips away some of the material to make it more porous while simultaneously infusing it with oxygen.

This makes the charcoal not only more reactive in general but safe for use with certain medical treatments. Here, we have compiled a list of the 7 reasons why you need to use activated charcoal as medicine.

Why You Should Consider Having Activated Charcoal as a Prepper:

Though this article focuses primarily on the health benefits of activated charcoal, as a prepper, we are always on the lookout to use all parts of the buffalo, per se. As such, it is always helpful to understand how activated charcoal can be used even when it is not for the explicit purposes it was designed for to extend its usefulness and versatility.

Thankfully, activated charcoal is similar enough to charcoal in general that it shares virtually all of its uses--including of course to start fires, though its exceedingly porous nature will prevent it from generating the same kind of smoldering coals that you would expect to get from normal charcoal.

Still, the wide variety of uses of activated charcoal makes it a solid choice for a prepper who has a bit of room to spare. Keep in mind, unless you are traveling heavy and have a means of carrying additional gear, this may not actually be one of the better items to keep in your bug out bag--mostly due to the fact that it is a bit of a space hog despite being fairly light for its size.

Something to remember, though activated charcoal can ostensibly be used for pretty much the same uses as regular charcoal, the same cannot be said to be true in reverse. Regular charcoal will not provide any of the unique benefits of activated charcoal and in fact, has numerous toxins that can make you sick if ingested.

Beyond cooking, activated charcoal's brittle nature lends itself well as a marking tool. This can be applied in numerous ways and to numerous surfaces. The most obvious of this type of application would be in the instance of writing a note or leaving a marker--for instance, if you are part of a larger group that gets separated.

You could use the activated charcoal to leave a note of sorts on a wall or other large surface for your party members to find.

Another type marking use for activated charcoal might not necessarily be so obvious: camouflage.

Remember, when bugging out in the wilds, it is always important to practice any and every “Grey Man” technique that you can--first and foremost making sure that your physical body is more difficult to see.

By smearing and covering your exposed skin with activated charcoal, you are far less likely to be noticed by the average passerby.

1. Poison and Toxin Treatment

We will begin our list with the most obvious and well-known medical benefit of activated charcoal and that is its use when someone has ingested poison or some other toxic substance. Out of all the other potential health benefits on this list that activated charcoal may provide, this is by far the most studied and widely applied benefit.

In fact, when someone is rushed to the hospital for poisoning--even when it is an overdose of drugs --one of the first steps is generally to administer activated charcoal. While this should not be taken to perceive activated charcoal as a panacea for this type of issue, its appropriate applications in this regard are fairly vast.

The activated charcoal is able to help remove the poison or toxins from the patient's body due to a similar that it accomplishes many of its purported health benefits: because of its porous nature. Essentially, the porous nature of activated charcoal--even on a microscopic level--makes it ideal for allowing the toxins and poisons to migrate freely within it.

Then the naturally reactive nature of carbon, which is the primary element that activated charcoal is made out of, chemically bonds with the toxins or poison.

Ultimately, this process essentially traps the poison or toxin within your body in a non-reactive form until your body can then process the larger activated charcoal molecule and remove it from the body--with the poison or toxin in tow.

Though, it is important to be sure not to mix activated charcoal with other poison or toxin remedies as the activated charcoal is then likely to adsorb that substance as well. Still, you will want to take between 50 to 100 mg at first and then 12 ½ mg every two to four hours thereafter until the risk has passed.

2. Anti-Parasitic

While this may not necessarily be the most well-known use for activated charcoal it is actually one of the oldest. Ancient Egyptians used activated charcoal as an anti-parasitic more than 3000 years ago.

As often happens, it may take a little while for the modern world to clue into the wisdom of the ancients, but once we do, we science the heck out of it to make sure it becomes as potent and effective as possible.

In this function, it works effectively the same way that it does when used as an emergency detoxifier. The porous nature of the activated charcoal allows for the parasites the flow freely within the molecules.

Then, once the parasites have entered the activated charcoal molecule, the reactive nature of the carbon traps them like a magnet where they will remain until they are passed through your system.

This can be a major form of treatment when bugging out as there are multiple ways that you can get parasites. While eating or drinking infected food and water are likely to be the most common and obvious, many parasites can simply burrow into your skin from touching an infected surface.

One of the best things about activated charcoal is that it will actually function regardless of where the parasite has set up base.

3. Digestion Aid

When out in the wilds, more often than not it is not the threats outside that pose the greatest danger but the threats from within instead. Arguably chief among these is anything that can cause diarrhea.

Whether it is caused by tainted food or water or simply acquired through some errant microorganism, diarrhea can present a legitimately life-threatening risk to any prepper due to its numerous debilitating symptoms.

Beyond the physical discomfort, continued positions or vulnerability, and pace-killing effect that diarrhea can cause, its biggest risk to any prepper is the threat of dehydration. Since water is already such a scarce and valuable resource when bugging out, preventing you from wasting more of it should be considered one of the more paramount tasks.

Thankfully, if you should for any reason develop diarrhea, activated charcoal can help prevent it from draining your liquid resources. Though, you should definitely proceed with caution when using activated charcoal for this purpose as it could potentially cause the opposite problem.

Basically, activated charcoal will act as a stool hardener. If you have diarrhea, then this can make activated charcoal a literal lifesaver. However, if you do not have a need for a stool hardener, then using activated charcoal in this context can cause the opposite affliction: constipation.

Beyond its benefits in helping prevent dehydration through diarrhea, activated charcoal can actually provide relief for other digestive issues as well. Specifically, if you are known to develop bloating or gas after a meal, activated charcoal has been clinically proven to not only reduce the gas generated but filter it while still inside you.

4. Filtration

If there is one thing that preppers can never have too many of, it is methods of water filtration. As by far the most valuable resource when bugging out, the ability to ensure that you can find or provide clean drinking water is pretty much priority number one.

This is especially important considering most freshwater rivers, lakes, and streams have been contaminated with either natural or industrial pollutants.

Granted, activated charcoal should not be your primary source for filtering out clean water as carrying enough of it to do so for any length of time would ultimately cost you more in weight and space than it is worth.

However, should your portable water filter--or more likely your filtered drinking straw--fail for some reason, then activated charcoal can serve admirably in the interim until you can find or devise another reliable method of filtering clean water.

One thing to keep in mind though, activated charcoal does have its limitation in terms of filtration and those limits will show themselves up more with water filtration than body detoxification. Specifically, activated charcoal is not a suitable method of filtration for most microorganisms.

As mentioned prior, activated charcoal is a potent anti-parasitic, but it will not perform as well for bacteria or viruses.

That said, there are a wide variety of substances that activated charcoal will remove, though this should not necessarily be much of a surprise considering it is actually one of the primary materials used for many of the popular at-home water filtration methods.

For example, Brita filters use activated carbon filters to remove chlorine, fluoride, pesticides, many heavy metals, and some petroleum-based compounds. Regardless, you will still want to add some type of consumable antiseptic to the water after it has been filtered.

5. Skin Care

This may seem a bit superficial, but any experienced prepper understands how important skin care is when out in the wilds. In our sterilized, civilized society, we often forget how contaminated the world is with infection and disease. While this does not actually present too much of a risk for us in most circumstances, there is a reason people would die from a minor scratch centuries ago.

In this regard, activated charcoal can perform a wide variety of skin care functions that can help you stave off disease and infection contracted through your skin. The most obvious of these uses is as a poultice.

Keep in mind, the activated charcoal will not trap an infection, but your body often does. It will surround the infection with white blood cells and form a protective pus bubble--which is something that the activated charcoal can draw out.

Beyond actual open wounds, activated charcoal can be used to help clear up all sorts of skin issues. If you have acne or more advanced pore blockages and growths like cysts or boils, activated charcoal will once again come to the rescue by drawing out the pus and obstructions.

In fact, activated charcoal can even help alleviate many bug bites by drawing out the venom--though it is not a suitable substitute for anti-venom.

TOP 4 DIY CHARCOAL FACE MASKS FOR ACNE

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MASK 1:



- Take a bowl and Mix all the ingredients. Stir the combination gently. Apply the mask at face for 10 minutes. After removing the mask, do moisturize the skin.

MASK 2:



- Take a bowl and Mix all the ingredients. Stir the combination gently. Apply the mask few minutes before washing off.

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6. Teeth Whitening

Sure, this one may sound a bit superficial like the skin care consideration, but if there is anything you should have picked up by now, it is that this seemingly innocuous effect actually holds a legitimate health benefit which is often overlooked by preppers.

We are of course talking about oral hygiene. Granted, we are well aware that most preppers recognize its importance, but how many of you consider more than the basics of toothpaste and floss?

See, activated charcoal does not whiten your teeth the same way that whitening toothpaste does. Whitening toothpaste uses some form of peroxide to actual bleach your teeth whiter.

While whitening toothpastes may ensure that their formula is non-toxic, it does little more than whitewash the underlying cause of many instances of discolored teeth in the first place: plaque.

Thankfully, activated charcoal's molecular composition once again comes into play to provide a genuine health benefit. Basically, the activated charcoal functions as a type of grit which is strong enough to rub away the plaque, but gentle enough to spare your enamel.

Then, once the plaque has been loosened, the adsorption effect of the activated charcoal, traps it, preventing it from reattaching.

It is important to remember that plaque in your mouth can take a number of forms. While we might be familiar with the plaque buildup on our teeth, it also has a tendency to build up on our gums as well which can lead to gingivitis or other forms of gum disease.

The fact that this inherently whitens your teeth as well is just icing on the cake.

7. General Detoxifying

While every other soccer mom might go on and on about their juice cleanse or their hot pepper cleanse or whatever type of cleanse happens to be the trend of the week, there are few substances out there that can accomplish what all of those fad cleanses claim to better than activated charcoal.

While this may not necessarily constitute a medical emergency, this can still present some legitimate benefits for preppers--especially when bugging out.

It is no secret that being able to survive the harsh conditions of the wild--even in a temperate and plentiful region--require that you are in excellent physical condition.

Granted, plenty of knowledge and wisdom can take you a long way towards ensuring survival, but once your body begins to go, especially if that occurs while in the wilds--there are few tips or tricks that can save you for long until you can reach your bug out location or some other form of safe shelter.

While activated charcoal may not be able to fix decades of poor lifestyle choices, it can definitely help clean out all of the worst junk accumulated in your body for whenever you are ready to get in shape.

If you are already in fit condition, periodic consumption of activated charcoal can help keep your

organs clean and free from various toxins like heavy metals.

Conclusion

As we can see, activated charcoal provides a wide range of uses beyond the one that many people might already know. While it can serve admirably as a general substitute for basic charcoal, its true value lies in the numerous benefits to your health that it can offer.

In fact, we did not even cover some of the more interesting benefits as they are often less relevant to immediate survival needs.

That said, activated charcoal has also been shown to help reduce cholesterol levels over an extended period of time and improve the functioning of the kidneys, liver, and brain when taken regularly.

Of course, it is important to remember that any regular use of activated charcoal should be complemented by drinking plenty of water to avoid constipation, which is also part of the reason we left long-term uses off of our list.

Regardless, with these 7 ways to use activated charcoal as medicine, there is a good chance that you should find some space in your bug out bag for it. As an exceedingly versatile piece of gear, activated charcoal is quintessentially a viable survival tool.



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techniques!**

Resources

- [Top 10 Activated Charcoal Uses & Benefits – Dr. Axe](#)
- [10 Activated Charcoal Benefits & Uses – Food Matters](#)
- [What Is Activated Charcoal Good For? Benefits and Uses – Health Line](#)

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