

Activated Charcoal is given to absorb certain types of poisons after ingestion has occurred.

The decision to administer should be made by on-line medical control with type of poison and transport time being considered.

INDICATIONS:

- Poisoning by ingestion for the conscious patient
- Ingestion has occurred within 1 hour
- Patient has ingested a potentially toxic amount
- Ingested substance is known to be absorbed by charcoal

POTENTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS:

- Vomiting, nausea and airway obstruction
- Diarrhea, dehydration, shock, cramping (charcoal with sorbitol)

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

- Altered mental status, decreased level of consciousness or uncooperative patient
- Ingestion of hydrocarbon, corrosive or caustic substances
- Patient unable to swallow

PRECAUTIONS:

- Does not absorb all types of drugs or toxic substances
- Use Pediatric Guideline for children under age 8 or 100 pounds

1. Assess the patient, treat ABC problems, obtain baseline vitals and consider transport plan based on general impression.
2. Remove any remaining pills, tablets, or fragments from patients' mouth, if necessary.
3. Determine what the patient has ingested and read label regarding poisoning directions, if applicable.
4. Contact on-line medical control and follow orders received from on-line medical control.
5. If unable to contact medical control Contact Poison Control at 1-800-860-0620, or on the designated EMS frequency.
6. If directed to administer Activated Charcoal, proceed with guideline.

The Idaho EMS Bureau has taken extreme caution to ensure all information is accurate and in accordance with professional standards in effect at the time of publication. This guideline is for reference and may be modified at the discretion of the EMS Medical Director. It is recommended that care be based on the patient's clinical presentation and on authorized policies and guidelines.

ADULT

7. Take full body substance isolation precautions, including gloves, mask, eye protection, and clothing cover.
8. Check the expiration date and confirm that the medication is Activated Charcoal or Activated Charcoal with Sorbitol.
9. Shake the container or massage the tube to thoroughly mix before using and as needed during use.
10. Encourage the patient to drink one dose, a covered container and a straw may improve patient compliance. Although not intended to induce vomiting, be prepared for the patient to vomit.

**Usual adult dose (Adult=over 100 lbs):
25-50 grams of Activated Charcoal or Activated Charcoal with Sorbitol**

11. Have suction ready and be ready to manage airway difficulties. If patient vomits, consider contacting On-Line Medical Control for permission to administer one more dose.
12. If the patient does not drink the medication right away, the charcoal will need to be shaken again.
13. Record the time of administration, dose given and the results.
14. Be alert for vomiting. If vomiting occurs, position patient on side and protect airway. Document stomach contents, (pill fragments, amount, etc.)
15. Transport patient promptly, bringing label, or as much information about contaminant as possible with you.
16. Perform ongoing assessment en route.

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