

PEDIATRIC

BASIC LIFE SUPPORT GUIDELINE

ACTIVATED CHARCOAL

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 the type of poison and transport time being considered.

INDICATIONS:

- Poisoning by ingestion for the conscious patient
- Ingestion has occurred within 1 hour
- Ingested substance is known to be absorbed by charcoal

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

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

POTENTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS:

- Vomiting, aspiration, and airway obstruction
- Diarrhea, dehydration, shock, cramping (if sorbitol is included in charcoal)

PRECAUTIONS:

- Do not administer activated charcoal with sorbitol to infants under 1 year old

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 patient's mouth, if necessary.
3. Determine what the patient has ingested and read label regarding poisoning directions.
4. Contact On-Line Medical Control.
5. If unable to contact On-Line Medical Control contact Poison Control at 1-800-860-0620 or on a designated EMS frequency and obtain additional information.
6. If directed to administer Activated Charcoal, proceed with guideline
7. Take full body substance isolation precautions; including gloves, mask, eye protection, and clothing cover.

The Idaho EMSC Project 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 child's clinical presentation and on authorized policies and protocols.

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8. Use Aqueous Charcoal unless advised to use charcoal containing sorbitol.
9. Check the expiration date and confirm that the medication is activated charcoal.
10. Shake the container or massage the tube to thoroughly mix before using and as needed during use.
11. Encourage the patient to drink one dose, a covered container and a straw may improve patient compliance. Be prepared for the patient to vomit.

Usual infant/child dose: 1gm/kg to a maximum of 50 grams
Pounds ÷ 2.2 = Kilograms= Grams of Charcoal

Pounds	Kilograms	Grams of Charcoal
10	4.5	5
20	9	10
30	13.6	15
40	18	20
50	22.7	25
60	27.3	27
70	31.8	32
80	36.3	36
90	40.9	41
100	45	45
Over 100	50	50

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

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