

# Activated Charcoal (Toxiban®)

*Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff*

## Generic Name

Activated Charcoal

## Brand Name

CharcoAid, Liqui-Char-Vet Aqueous Suspension, Toxiban

## Type of Drug

Adsorbent/detoxification therapy

## Form and Storage

Powder

Store in a tightly closed metal or glass container or in the manufacturer's supplied container.

## Indications for Use

Treatment of certain poisoning and drug overdoses.

## General Information

FDA approved for use in veterinary medicine. Available by prescription and over the counter. Finely ground charcoal is given to the patient by mouth to bind toxins in the stomach and intestines and pass them through the body without allowing them to be absorbed. Needs to be given soon after ingestion of the toxin. It is usually administered via a stomach tube. Some toxins such as acids and alkalis are poorly adsorbed by activated charcoal.

## Usual Dose and Administration

Contact your veterinarian, as it does not help with all types of toxins.

## Side Effects

May see vomiting, diarrhea, or constipation. Feces will be black.

## Contraindications/Warnings

Do not give to a patient who is not fully conscious.

It is not an antidote. Supportive and symptomatic care is needed.

Do not use in case of ingestion of caustic substances or mineral acids.

Does not help with certain types of toxins such as alcohol, ethanol, or methanol.

Endoscopic evaluation will be inhibited after treatment with activated charcoal.

Use with caution to avoid aspiration of the charcoal.

Will stain fabrics black.

There are no known contraindications for using activated charcoal during pregnancy and lactation.

## Drug or Food Interactions

Separate other oral medications/treatments by at least 3 hours or the absorption of the medication will be decreased.

Give after vomiting has been induced if vomiting is indicated for the type of poison ingested.

Dairy products and mineral oil will decrease the effectiveness of activated charcoal.

## Overdose/Toxicity

None known.

## Summary

Activated charcoal is used orally to prevent the absorption of various toxins (e.g., insecticides, aspirin overdose) from the stomach and intestine. It must be given soon after the ingestion of the toxin/poison. It is not an antidote, and other supportive care and medications may be needed for the treatment of the poisoning.