

Bentonite clay is “the clay with a thousand uses.” This naturally occurring mineral has a strong affinity for water, and through a process called ion exchange, is a strong and effective binding agent. This natural remedy is suitable for internal and external personal use, and can be used as an environmentally friendly alternative in your yard and organic garden.

**Bentonite** is an absorbent aluminium phyllosilicate, essentially impure clay consisting mostly of montmorillonite. There are different types of bentonite, each named after the respective dominant element, such as **potassium** (K), **sodium**(Na), **calcium** (Ca), and **aluminum** (Al).

Experts debate a number of nomenclatorial problems with the classification of bentonite clays. Bentonite usually forms from weathering of volcanic ash, most often in the presence of water. However, the term bentonite, as well as a similar clay called tonstein, has been used for clay beds of uncertain origin.

For industrial purposes, **two main classes** of bentonite exist: **sodium** and **calcium bentonite**.

Most sodium bentonite deposits in the United States are found in the west. Sodium bentonite is a swelling clay absorbing up to 30 times its bulk in water.

The majority of the Calcium Bentonite deposits in the United States are found in the south. Calcium bentonite is a non-swelling clay.

**I am not a doctor nor do I have any medical background.  
All information is presented for educational purposes only  
and should not be substituted for the advice of a qualified health care  
professional.**

Using any type of earth internally, even well known *therapeutic healing clays*, is quite a daunting proposition for those unfamiliar with the nature of specialty clays. However, there is no doubt that the informed use of clays internally, coupled with dietary modifications, can accomplish healing and system support to a degree that no other substance can.

Furthermore, activities such as drinking clay water, sucking on dry clay balls, and using clay for dental health, is a practice that predates recorded history and spans the entire globe. Evidence strongly suggests that people ( and animals ) have been safely and effectively using dietary clays for health since before the advent of fire.

While the effectiveness of clay use internally does have some modern scientific backing , the effects of clay internally remain largely understudied and even often

misunderstood. Furthermore, each and every clay is unique, and different clays may respond in the body differently.

There are clays available that are perfectly safe to use every single day, there are effective clays that probably should only be used in moderation ( but are very therapeutic ); some clays that may pose a risk to use ( but have been proven to be very effective for some illnesses ) and then there are clays that should not be taken internally. There are some clays that are likely very good, but do not have an extensive history of human use. So, choosing a clay that is right for any one person can be quite intimidating. Through the rest of this article we will attempt to demystify edible clays.

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There are individuals who, due to unrectified health conditions, have had to learn to rely on drinking clays in order to maintain a good standard of health. Mahatma Gandhi was one such individual. Others, such as Jordan S. Rubin ( founder of the "Maker's Diet ), have been able to regain a full life, in part, through the practice of using clays to help with life threatening digestive conditions and disorders.

Even more people, such as many of the sufferers of the Dunsmuir Chemical Spill, discover that dietary clays can be literal life savers in an emergency situation. In Dunsmuir, the medical community at large was not able to respond at all to the extreme levels of toxicity experienced by the folks in Dunsmuir. The university scientists came and went with hardly a word for the wary ( or the wise ). Clay use provided rapid and permanent relief from severe symptoms of acute toxicity that showed strong indications of becoming chronic.

### **Uses of healing clays such as bentonite, montmorillonite, and kaolin ingested orally:**

- To assist in the removal of toxic substances in the digestive system, both chemical and pathological
  - Bacterial food poisoning, organic and inorganic toxicity
- To cleanse the colon and promote proper bacterial balance in the intestines
- To begin the process of detoxification of the liver
- To stimulate liver function
- As a part of short term cleansing programs used to promote good health
- Critical to support external healing clay treatment ( pelotherapy )

- Removal of heavy metals and recovery from chemical therapies and radiation
- With special long term treatments, to increase T-cell count and fix free oxygen in the blood stream
  - Reduction of free radical damage ( thus anti-aging )
  - Improved immune system function
  - Improved cellular respiration
- Improved digestive efficiency
- Reduce food sensitivities ( the so called developed "allergies" )
- Stimulate healing by strengthening the body's general constitution

In order to understand how bentonite and other healing clays can be used internally, it is important to remember several facts:

1. Many cultures have used natural clays in small amounts as a part of a **daily diet** ( see the work of Dr. West Price DDS, *Nutrition and Physical Degeneration*, Price-Pottenger Nutrition Foundation ). Traditionally, many indigenous tribes utilized clayish water to prevent upset stomachs by dipping their food in clay solutions while eating. Furthermore, in some rather unique parts of the world, clay particles naturally deposited in the entire local water supply ( such as the area where the Hunzakuts live, in Pakistan ) have been consumed daily for a lifetime. People who live lifetimes in similiar locations are traditionally extremely long lived and healthy, with the clay particles being one factor of high quality water supplies that contribute to healthy living.
2. When introducing clay into the diet of an adult, there will be an adjustment period where a wide variety of brief side effects may manifest.
  1. As an example, constipation may occur. Clay taken internally does not cause constipation, the overall condition of the body's elimination system is the determining factor. It is not wise to stop clay use totally if constipation occurs, as this should indicate to the individual that serious degenerative conditions are present in the digestive system.
3. Different healing clays will respond differently with different people. Every therapeutic clay and every person is unique. One person may love the clay that the next person dislikes, and vice versa.
4. Healing clay will seldom respond *in synergy* with unhealthy foods and an incorrect diet. For maximum benefit, both the liver and the elimination system needs to be properly stimulated.

5. When utilizing clays internally, it is equally important that the body is properly hydrated.
6. The quality of water is an important and equally unstudied element in preparing healing clays for internal use.

In a modern society, it is increasingly difficult to live a lifestyle that promotes true health. While understanding how to best utilize healing clays internally is important, we'd also like to clarify that benefit can be achieved without modifications to diet and lifestyle. However, for sustained health and maximum effect of clay, dietary considerations are extremely important.

Please keep in mind that clay should never come in contact with metal.

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#### Detoxification

As a binding agent, when it is ingested bentonite clay absorbs internal contaminants such as toxins, heavy metals and poisons. Bentonite clay is a chelator of the highest order, and acts like a powerful vacuum cleaning sucking up poisons and heavy from the body. When bentonite clay mixes with water, its chemical composition changes, and attracts, absorbs and binds internal contaminants to the clay. According to AboutClay.com, bentonite clay can absorb up to 32 times its molecular weight.

#### Skin Rejuvenation and Conditions

A type of bentonite clay called calcium bentonite can work on a family of viruses that cause warts. The human papillomavirus (HPV), can cause common, flat and plantar warts, which you can remove by covering them with a bentonite clay mudpack. A clay mudpack works by attracting and absorbing the virus, in the same fashion as ingested bentonite clay. In addition, bentonite clay mudpacks can help relieve symptoms of eczema and psoriasis, accelerates the body's natural response to abscesses or carbuncles on the skin's surface. It has also been demonstrated to be true for spider or serious insect bites.

**Treatment of MRSA: Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA)** infections are traditionally found in hospitals (nosocomial infections). This highly dangerous infection responds only to powerful drugs dispensed by a doctor. Researchers at Arizona State University found that Bentonite Clay could be applied to the site of a MRSA infection to contain the bacteria from spreading throughout other parts of the body.

## **Aids Digestion:**

Ingesting clay sounds like an odd thing to do at first, but you may change your mind when you learn about the immediate impact it has on the digestive tract. When mixed with water, bentonite clay swells up like a sponge, forming a highly porous substance that attracts and binds toxins into its open spaces. The clay behaves like fiber in the body, providing bulk to stimulate the intestinal muscles to perform their digestive duties effectively. This greatly reduces constipation, and improves irritable bowel symptoms. Along with the toxins, the clay passes through your body, eliminating them as waste to improve your gastrointestinal health.

**Yard and Garden Applications:** In his book, “The Healing Clay,” author Michel Abehsera cites numerous ways you can use bentonite clay as an alternative to pesticides and chemicals. For example, Abehsera recommends packing tree wounds and exposed branch ends after trimming with a bentonite clay mudpack to protect it from insects and bacteria. You can also mix bentonite clay with other soil additives, such as sand, humus and manure to create a custom made gardening soil.

This just a smattering of how you can use versatile clay, and another one of my “must have” items in the medicine cabinet.