

Deterra® Drug Deactivation System Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)



How does Deterra® work?

Each patented Deterra® pouch contains a water-soluble inner pod containing MAT₁₂® activated carbon. Once the pharmaceuticals are placed in the pouch, warm water is then added, which dissolves the inner pod releasing the activated carbon. The warm water also dissolves prescription pills, patches and liquids, allowing them to be adsorbed by the carbon, rendering them inert and non-retrievable.

What drugs will Deterra® deactivate?

Deterra® will deactivate any organic medications including opioids. However, it will not adsorb any metals, such as iron or lithium, contained in certain medications. If a select medication has specific disposal instructions, please follow those instructions.

Why shouldn't I just flush or "sink" unused meds?

Water treatment facilities struggle to filter out all pharmaceutical drugs from the water. As of 2014, there were over 1,500 published reports of the occurrence of pharmaceuticals in sewage, surface waters, ground waters, and elsewhere. Because of these findings, most federal, state and local authorities are now recommending (and many requiring) that pharmaceuticals NOT be disposed in the toilet or sink.

What about mixing medications with cat litter, coffee grounds or sawdust? How does that compare?

Cat litter, coffee grounds, and sawdust make the drug undesirable but do not deactivate the drugs. Once in the landfill, these drugs can still leach out into the ground and into the water. Third party testing proves that the MAT₁₂® carbon in Deterra® deactivates the drugs rendering them inert and more environmentally friendly.

How quickly does the deactivation process work?

With Deterra®, the process of deactivation starts immediately, but it takes time to complete. Some highly soluble drugs will dissolve and react rapidly, while other less soluble drug types will take longer to dissolve and react. The deactivation period varies based on volume and type of medication. It is important to keep Deterra® out of the reach of children and pets as the product is deactivated.

Are different sizes of Deterra® available?

Yes, Deterra® is available in multiple sizes. Please consult our website or a Deterra® representative to determine which size will best meet your needs. www.deterrasystem.com

What is the capacity of Deterra® for pharmaceuticals? What if I accidentally added more drugs than the amount recommended?

The recommended capacity is listed on each Deterra® package. Adding drugs to Deterra® in amounts at (or less than) our recommended capacity will result in optimal deactivation efficiency. If one were to add more than the recommended pharmaceutical capacity, deactivation of additional drugs will still occur but at reduced efficiency.