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# What Is Shungite?

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ANTON NOVIKOV / GETTY IMAGES

Shungite is a carbon-rich metallic black stone often used in

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chemical requirements to be considered such.<sup>[1]</sup> Most shungite originates from a village called Sunga in Karelia, Russia, where it has been used for healing and water purification for hundreds of years.<sup>[2]</sup>

Today, proponents of shungite stones claim the stone can aid healing, clear negative energy, block harmful radiation, and purify drinking water. Due to its carbon content and unique form, shungite can destroy harmful pathogens and remove bacteria and viruses from water.<sup>[1]</sup> However, there is no solid evidence that shungite can help improve health conditions, relieve [stress](#), or protect you from electromagnetic fields (EMFs).

Here is what science says about the benefits and risks of shungite.

#### DEFINITION

### What is carbon?

Carbon is a chemical element that forms all living things. Most of Earth's carbon is found in rocks and sediments, like coal—a fossil fuel burned to create energy.<sup>[3]</sup> Like fossil fuels high in carbon, shungite may have originated from dead plant and animal matter that decayed for billions of years. However, the actual origin of shungite is not understood and remains a mystery.<sup>[1]</sup>

## Benefits of Shungite

There isn't much scientific evidence to prove drinking water with shungite or holding the stone offers health benefits. Most claims are anecdotal or lack solid research. Shungite's carbon content can also vary, affecting its effectiveness at absorbing pathogens.

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finish free of imperfections. Raw shungite contains 60% carbon and has visible flaws like veining—layers of other minerals like quartes or pyrite. <sup>[1]</sup>  
<sup>[2]</sup>

Here's the very limited science behind the potential benefits of shungite.

## May Help Destroy Bacteria and Viruses

Shungite has antibacterial and antiviral properties thanks to its fullerenes. Fullerenes are spherical molecules containing 60 carbon atoms that create a hollow carbon nanostructure (CNS). Lab research shows the CNSs in shungite can destroy pathogens in two ways: <sup>[4]</sup>

1. Damage bacteria and viruses' cellular walls
2. Cause microbes to die after losing electrons (negatively charged particles)

However, there is no solid evidence that shungite's ability to kill bacteria and viruses can help treat infections or health conditions. No practical human studies show that applying shungite water topically, drinking shungite water, or meditating with shungite stones can treat bacterial and viral infections.

## Helps Purify Water

Shungite has a long history as a water purification method, and drinking shungite water (water infused with shungite stone) may help remove harmful pathogens that can cause disease and health issues. According to a 2017 review, the carbon structure of shungite that destroys bacteria and viruses can also remove these germs from water sources. <sup>[4]</sup> However, there is one caveat: researchers have found that shungite can release heavy  
to water—especially if the stone is not washed correctly. <sup>[5]</sup>

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28% carbon shungite had weak antibacterial properties. After 24 hours, shungite water eliminated bacteria like *Escherichia coli* ([E. coli](#)), *Streptococcus uberis* (*S. uberis*), and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (*P. aeruginosa*). But, shungite water did not eliminate [Staphylococcus aureus](#) (*S. aureus*) bacteria or [Candida albicans](#) (*C. albicans*) yeast. <sup>[6]</sup>

## May Reduce Emotional Stress

If you meditate or practice [mindfulness](#) with shungite, you may experience stress relief. However, since [meditation](#) is a proven stress-relief method, it's unlikely the shungite is actually helping. <sup>[7]</sup> Like other healing stones or crystals, people who swear shungite stones help reduce stress and related [inflammation](#) may be experiencing the placebo effect. <sup>[8]</sup>

The placebo effect is when someone believes something will give them positive results. As a result, they experience a positive outcome. Studies suggest the placebo effect causes your brain to respond to your beliefs, not necessarily the treatment. <sup>[9]</sup> That said, there is no evidence that shungite can directly reduce emotional stress or absorb negative energy.

## May Reduce Oxidative Stress from EMFs

Proponents of shungite also claim the stone can help protect people from cell-damaging oxidative stress caused by EMFs—radiation from sunlight and electronics. However, there is no human research to prove this claim.

A 2017 animal study also found that applying shungite to mice helped reduce skin damage and inflammatory markers from ultraviolet (UV) radiation. <sup>[10]</sup> Another outdated animal study from 2003 suggests using shungite shields helped protect rats from EMF emissions that cause radiation and damage the body through oxidative stress. <sup>[11]</sup> We still need

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ch to prove that shungite can reduce oxidative stress and caused by radiation.

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## How to Use Shungite

While it's unlikely shungite offers many benefits besides purifying water, here's how to incorporate shungite into your lifestyle:

**Shungite-infused drinking water:** Steeping shungite stone in water or using a shungite water filter can help purify water and remove some germs. <sup>[5]</sup>

**Meditate with shungite:** During meditation or yoga, place shungite stones around you. You can also hold shungite in your hands during meditation.

**Carry shungite with you:** You can carry shungite in your bag or pocket—or wear shungite stones as jewelry.

**Place shungite near EMF sources:** While human research doesn't prove shungite protects people from radiation, you can still place shungite near electronic devices, like Wi-Fi routers.

**Decorate your home:** Like other crystals, you can place shungite throughout your home and near your bed for aesthetics and potential benefits.

## How to Make Shungite Water

If you want to drink shungite water, proceed with caution. There are no proven benefits to drinking shungite water, only that it can help purify water. (Reminder: shungite water can also leach heavy metals into water!)

If you still want to try shungite water, follow these steps to remove as many impurities as possible: <sup>[5]</sup>

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2. Repeat the washing process five times.

3. Soak your shungite in water in a 1:10 ratio for five days, changing the water out every day.
4. After you've soaked shungite for five days, place it in an infuser, teabag, or directly in your container. Cover with water and let it steep for another 24 hours.
5. Remove the shungite, and you're ready to drink your shungite water.

## Is Shungite Safe?

Drinking water with shungite can be risky, and no specific amount of shungite water is considered safe to drink. When submerged in water, shungite can release toxic heavy metals like nickel, copper, zinc, lead, arsenic, and cadmium. A 2020 study concluded that washing shungite in water for five days can reduce heavy metal levels.<sup>[5]</sup> When drinking shungite water, you should also avoid ingesting the stone. In addition to ingesting heavy metals, ingesting shungite stone could also put you at risk of choking or irritating your stomach and bowels.

In general, other uses of shungite are considered safe. Keeping shungite stone on your person as jewelry or displayed in your home is considered safe. However, shungite stones should be a complementary therapy—meaning shungite should be used with proven medical care and treatments for health conditions. Shungite stones should not be used as a replacement for other health treatments.

## A Quick Review

Shungite is a black stone with a unique carbon structure. Like healing crystals, shungite is often sold as a healing cure-all. However, there is not much evidence to prove that shungite can heal health conditions, reduce

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The only proven benefit of shungite is that its carbon structure helps purify water by destroying viruses and bacteria. However, drinking shungite water may be unsafe since the stone can release heavy metals. To help reduce heavy metals, researchers suggest soaking one part shungite in 10 parts water for five days—changing the water daily—before making shungite water. <sup>[5]</sup> Talk with your healthcare provider if you have a health condition and want to incorporate shungite into your lifestyle. Using shungite should never replace your routine medical care.

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checking person's  
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 Naturopathic  
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 Person talking to  
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 Person sitting with eyes closed, waving palo santo stick for relaxation

 Young multiracial or Latina woman meditating at

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 Person meeting with holistic practitioner

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