

[Open Peer Review on Qeios](#)

Anthracene

National Cancer Institute

Source

National Cancer Institute. *Anthracene*. NCI Thesaurus. Code C251.

Anthracene, also called paranaphthalene or green oil, a solid polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH) consisting of three benzene rings derived from coal-tar, is the simplest tricyclic aromatic hydrocarbon. It is on the EPA's priority pollutant list. It is ubiquitous in the environment as a product of incomplete combustion of fossil fuels. It has been identified in surface and drinking water, ambient air, exhaust emissions, smoke of cigarettes and cigars, and in smoked foods and edible aquatic organisms. It is primarily used as an intermediate in the production of dyes, smoke screens, scintillation counter crystals, and in organic semiconductor research. Although a large body of literature exists on the toxicity of PAHs, data for anthracene are limited. Prolonged exposure causes variety of topical and systemic adverse reactions. Carcinogenicity bioassays with anthracene generally gave negative results.