



## If You are Exposed

- Rinse off yourself, children, and animals with clean water if exposed to blooms or surface scums, or water that is noticeably discolored.
- Stop using the water and consider medical attention if people or animals have symptoms and might have touched, swallowed, or inhaled surface waters with possible blooms. Symptoms include diarrhea, nausea or vomiting; skin, eye or throat irritation; and allergic reactions or breathing difficulties.

## Report it.

- Please report suspicious blooms to [HABsInfo@dec.ny.gov](mailto:HABsInfo@dec.ny.gov), your local health department ([health.ny.gov/EnvironmentalContacts](http://health.ny.gov/EnvironmentalContacts)), or [harmfulalgae@health.ny.gov](mailto:harmfulalgae@health.ny.gov)
- Please report symptoms to your local health department or [harmfulalgae@health.ny.gov](mailto:harmfulalgae@health.ny.gov)

### More Information

NYS Department of Health

[www.health.ny.gov/harmfulalgae](http://www.health.ny.gov/harmfulalgae)

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

[www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/77118.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/77118.html)

US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[www.cdc.gov/nceh/hsb/hab/default.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/hsb/hab/default.htm)

US Environmental Protection Agency

[www2.epa.gov/nutrient-policy-data/cyanohabs](http://www2.epa.gov/nutrient-policy-data/cyanohabs)

Avoid blooms in surface waters because blue-green algae can cause health effects in people and animals.



## Know it.

It might be a blue-green algae bloom if you see:

- Strongly colored water.
- Paint-like appearance.
- Floating mats or scums.



## Avoid it.

Always stay away from blooms in surface waters:

- Don't swim, fish, boat, or wade in areas with blooms.
- Don't eat fish caught from areas with blooms.

If you're **not** on a public water supply:

- Bloom or no bloom, never drink, prepare food, cook, or make ice with untreated surface water.
- During a bloom, don't drink, prepare food, cook, or make ice with surface water, even if you treat the water yourself. Also consider not using it for showering, bathing, or washing.

If you **are** on a public water supply:

- Your water is treated, disinfected and monitored for drinking and household use.



## Report it.

Report blooms to: [HABsInfo@dec.ny.gov](mailto:HABsInfo@dec.ny.gov), your local health department ([health.ny.gov/EnvironmentalContacts](http://health.ny.gov/EnvironmentalContacts)), or [harmfulalgae@health.ny.gov](mailto:harmfulalgae@health.ny.gov)

Report bloom-related symptoms to: Your local health department or [harmfulalgae@health.ny.gov](mailto:harmfulalgae@health.ny.gov)

Consider visiting a health care provider if you, your family, or your animals are experiencing symptoms that might be related to blue-green algae exposure.

Learn more [health.ny.gov/harmfulalgae](http://health.ny.gov/harmfulalgae)



# Blue-green Algae and Health



Know it.



Avoid it.



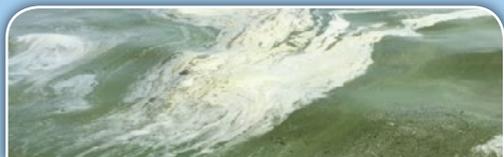
Report it.

# Know it.

Blue-green algae are microscopic organisms that can form dense blooms in surface waters. People and animals should avoid blooms because blue-green algae can cause health effects.

## Recognizing Blooms

Surface water affected by blue-green algae often is strongly colored (blue-green, green, yellow, white, brown, purple, or red) and can have a paint-like appearance. Under some conditions, blue-green algae can become so abundant that they form floating mats or scums on the water.



View more examples of blue-green algae blooms at [www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/81962html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/81962html)

## Blue-green Algae Advice

People can be exposed to blue-green algae and their toxins by contact (touching, swallowing, and inhaling) during water recreation, drinking water, and household use.

### Water Recreation

#### Swimming, wading, boating, fishing, or eating fish

- Avoid areas with blooms or surface scums, or water that is noticeably discolored.
- Keep children and animals away from areas with blooms or surface scums, or water that is noticeably discolored.
- Pay attention to official beach closures, advisory signs, press releases, and websites. Never swim at beaches that are closed and follow blue-green algae advice.
- Don't fish or eat fish caught from areas with blooms or surface scums, or from water that is noticeably discolored.



*Avoid blooms while swimming, fishing, boating, or wading.*

### Drinking Water and Household Use

#### If you are on a public water supply

Public water is always the best option for drinking, preparing food, cooking, or making ice, as well as washing and bathing, because water suppliers are required to treat, disinfect, and monitor water for their customers.

#### If you are not on a public water supply

**Never drink, prepare food, cook, or make ice with untreated surface water, bloom or no bloom.** Untreated surface water might contain blue-green algae and their toxins as well as other bacteria, parasites, or viruses that can cause illness. If you must wash dishes with untreated surface water, rinse with bottled water.

Even if you are treating surface water yourself, don't drink it during a bloom. Blue-green algae and their toxins are not removed with in-home treatment systems, or by boiling or disinfecting water with chlorine, ultraviolet light (UV), or other treatment. You also might consider not using the water during a bloom for showering, bathing, or washing.

Contact your local health department if you have questions about your water. Find contact information at [health.ny.gov/EnvironmentalContacts](http://health.ny.gov/EnvironmentalContacts)

# Avoid it.

### If you are not on public water

*Don't drink or prepare food with surface water, even if you treat it, because it could contain blue-green algae or toxins.*



*Boiling, freezing or in-home treatment does not remove blue-green algae or toxins.*

*Also, consider not using surface water for bathing or washing during a bloom.*

