

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

PROTECT YOUR HEALTH

Blue-green algae can be present in any fresh water body. It looks like green, blue-green, white or brown scum, foam or mats floating on the water. Usually it does not affect animals or people. However, warm water and abundant nutrients can cause blue-green algae to grow more rapidly than usual. These floating algal masses or “blooms” can produce natural toxins that are very potent. Dogs and children are most likely to be affected because of their smaller body size and tendency to stay in the water for longer periods.



Hoopla Tribal EPA recommends the following guidelines for recreational users of all freshwater areas in Hoopa Valley:

- Keep children, pets and livestock from swimming in or drinking water containing algal scums or mats.
- Adults should also avoid wading and swimming in water containing algal blooms. Try not to swallow or inhale water spray in an algal bloom area.
- Avoid swimming or recreating in stagnant or slow moving warm water (Side channels, ponds, back eddy).
- If no algal scums or mats are visible, you should still carefully watch young children and warn them not to swallow any water.
- Fish should be consumed only after removing the guts and liver and rinsing fillets in tap water.
- Never drink, cook with or wash dishes with water from rivers, streams or lakes.
- Get medical attention immediately if you think that you, your pet, or livestock might have been poisoned by blue-green algae toxins. Be sure to tell the doctor about possible contact with blue-green algae.

People can experience eye irritation, skin rash, mouth ulcers, vomiting, diarrhea, and cold or flu-like symptoms. While there is no antidote for exposures, persons should see their physician and those with pets which may have been exposed should go to their veterinarian for supportive care.

Potential symptoms in dogs following exposure to blue-green algae toxins can include lethargy, difficulty breathing, salivation, vomiting, urination, diarrhea, or convulsions.

