

Cyanobacteria

(Blue-Green Algae)

- Cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) naturally occur in lakes.
- Large growths called 'blooms' occur more often during warm weather.
- Some cyanobacteria produce toxins.
- People and animals can get sick if they come in contact with cyanobacterial blooms or drink water with toxins.

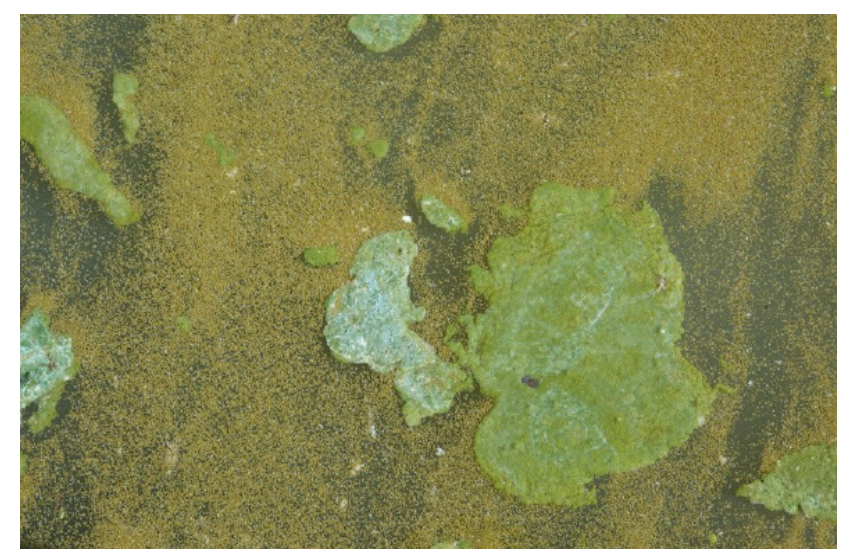


How can I protect myself and others?

- Avoid swimming in water with visible blooms. Areas without visible blooms may still be used.
- Do not drink untreated lake water. Boiling the water does not remove or destroy toxins.
- Avoid contact with cyanobacteria that has washed up on shore.
- Keep children, pets and livestock away from cyanobacterial blooms.

What do cyanobacterial blooms look like?

- Blooms can be blue, green, brown, pink or red.
- They may look like scum, streaks, grass clippings, fuzz balls, paint or pea soup.
- Decomposing blooms can be white or purple and can smell bad.
- Cyanobacterial blooms can appear quickly and move to other areas of the lake.



What should I do if I come in contact with a cyanobacterial bloom?

- Shower with clean treated water. If symptoms develop, call Health Link at 811.

Why should I avoid cyanobacterial blooms?

- Contact with blooms can cause eye, ear, and skin irritation, rashes and allergic reactions.
- Ingesting contaminated water can cause nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, stomach cramps and liver damage. High amounts of toxins can cause severe illness and death.

