



# Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs)

## Did you know?

*Harmful algal blooms can make water look or smell bad. Avoid getting sick by following advisories and staying out of water with signs of a harmful algal bloom.*

## Did you know

- HABs are when algae in water grows too much and creates toxins. These toxins can hurt people, animals, and the environment.
  - Children and people with respiratory illness or compromised immune systems are higher risk.
- Exposure can cause the following symptoms:
  - Eye, throat and/or skin irritation, rashes, allergic reactions.
  - Gastrointestinal- ingesting can lead to nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and abdominal pain.
  - Neurological- headaches, dizziness, and in sever cases, respiratory distress or paralysis.
  - Liver damage.
- HABs usually grow in warm water with lots of nutrients. Which become more recurring as global warming continues to rise.
  - Blooms worsen by things like fertilizers, sewage, and other pollution that run off into the water.
- You or your animals can get sick from a HABs via:
  - Coming in contact with the contaminated water, like swimming or playing.
  - Breathing in toxins that are in the air near the water, especially when you're boating or jet skiing.
  - Eating fish or shellfish that have been exposed to toxins.
  - Drinking contaminated, especially if the water treatment systems can't remove the toxins. Never consume untreated surface water, boiling does not make it safe to drink.

[more](#) →



- The most common type of algae in HABs is cyanobacteria or blue-green algae. However, other types of algae can also be dangerous. HABs in water look like scum, spilled paint, foam, globs of algae, dead fish or animals.



## Action Plan

- Check for swimming advisories before visiting lakes, oceans, or other bodies of water. Follow advisories to avoid getting sick. For HABs reporting and notifications visit [dec.ny.gov](https://dec.ny.gov).
  - Do not swim, wade or boat in water suspected of being contaminated with HABs.
  - Keep pets and other animals away from the water
- If contact occurs.
  - Rinse thoroughly with clean water.
  - Stop using water and seek medical attention immediately if symptoms develop.

## Resources

Check out the interactive map of New York Harmful Algal Bloom System (NYHABS). Visit [NYHABS Public 2.0](#).

For more information on HABs visit NYS DOH website on [Harmful Blue-Green Algae Blooms](#).

NYS Dept. of Health [Warning Sign: Avoid Blooms While Swimming, Boating and Fishing](#)

For more information visit: [nyscheck.org/rx/](https://nyscheck.org/rx/)



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