



Spotlight On

Some facts about Blue Green Algae

From the Winnebago County Health Department

What are cyanobacteria or blue-green algae?

Blue-Green Algae/Cyanobacteria are aquatic organisms that are found as floating mats on the surface of lakes or ponds. There are health concerns associated with contact with Blue Green Algae and the toxins produced by some species.

Does the presence of an algae bloom always mean the water is contaminated?

No. Just as not all cyanobacteria have blooms that are visible, not all cyanobacteria produce harmful toxins. Between 30 and 50 percent of blooms are from non-toxic species of cyanobacteria.

Resources

<http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/bluegreenalgae/Default.aspx?show=protect>

The best way to reduce or avoid exposure is to follow posted signs and follow common sense.

Here are some basic guidelines.

<http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/bluegreenalgae/Default.aspx>

What to do if you are exposed?

<http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/bluegreenalgae/Default.aspx>

If you develop symptoms consistent with cyanotoxin exposure following contact with scummy water, contact your physician or the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222. <https://www.co.winnebago.wi.us/health/contact-us>

If your pet has been wading or swimming in a pond, lake or stream, or has eaten dried algae, and is experiencing any seizure-like symptoms, or any of the other symptoms described, call your veterinarian immediately.

Report exposures to your local health department or local natural resources office. They can track expo-

sure, and use this information to determine when sampling efforts need to be increased, or if water bodies should be closed to the public.

WDNR <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/bluegreenalgae/>

CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/habs/>

Wisconsin Department of Health Services

<http://dhs.wi.gov/eh/bluegreenalgae/>

