



# Advice on Blue-green Algae (cyanobacteria)

## Why it is important to be aware of them

Blue-green algae pose risks to public and animal health when they form blooms and scums in freshwaters in warm summer months. They produce toxins that may cause skin rashes and more severe symptoms if swallowed. Dogs are at risk if they drink the water, or lick their coat after swimming, with severe symptoms requiring very rapid vet treatment.

## Potential health effects

- Skin rashes
- Eye irritations
- Vomiting and diarrhoea
- Fever and pains in muscles and joints

## Keep safe around a bloom

- Keep children and dogs away from the water
- Keep dogs on a lead
- Carry a bottle of water for your dog to drink and use it to wash off any scum

If you, or your pet, become unwell after contact with water that may be contaminated with blue-green algae, we'd recommend you seek immediate medical or veterinary advice.

## How can I recognise a blue-green algae bloom?

Blue-green algae first develop as small green particles of 1-2 mm [1]. If the bloom continues it can develop into more obvious green or turquoise wispy scum on the water surface [2-3].



## How can you report a bloom?

Use the **Bloomin' Algae app** to report a bloom. You can also contact your local authority environmental health department if you suspect a bloom and public warning signs are absent.

## Further guidance

The Bloomin' Algae website



Blue Cross advice for dog owners



## Further contacts:



0800 807060