



Toxic algae

A guide for dog owners

What is toxic algae?

Toxic algae is a mat forming cyanobacteria which occurs on stony, shallow rivers like the Tukituki. It can be black, brown, olive-green or grey. In summer when rivers are low, and water is warm, toxic algae can bloom. Mats can either become exposed as water levels drop or detach and wash to the side of the river. This is when dogs are most at risk.

Is it dangerous?

Yes, it can be. Toxic algae can produce powerful anatoxins which can be lethal to dogs when ingested. It produces a strong musky smell which can be attractive to dogs who may eat the mats if given a chance.

For more information
head to hbrc.govt.nz
and search #toxicalgae



How can I keep my dog safe?

Learn to identify toxic algae and check the river edge for any exposed or detached mats. If you find some, keep your dog away from the water's edge or consider moving to another river, or the beach.

Check your dog for signs of toxic algae poisoning. Symptoms in dogs are similar to heat stress and can include lethargy, muscle tremors, fast breathing, twitching, paralysis or convulsions.

Take your dog to the vet if you think it may have come into contact with toxic algae or if it displays any of these symptoms.



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