K. BREVIS RED TIDE
SAFETY & FAQs
What is *K. Brevis* red tide?

- Red tide in Florida is caused by a microscopic species of algae called *Karenia Brevis*.
- *K. Brevis* produces toxins that are harmful to people, pets and wildlife.
- In Florida, red tides start in the Gulf of Mexico and often begin during late summer or early fall.
**K. Brevis** exposure symptoms

- Exposure to *K. Brevis* red tides through airborne particles or contact with affected bodies of water can cause the following symptoms:

  - Respiratory irritation
  - Itchy/irritated eyes
  - Skin irritation
Red tide safety tips

• Avoid contact with bodies of water that are discolored or have a strong, unpleasant smell.

• Check red tide conditions before visiting the beach.
  • Cell Counts: https://myfwc.com/research/redtide/statewide/
  • Beach Conditions: https://visitbeaches.org/
  • Respiratory Forecast: https://habscope.gcoos.org/

• Leave the area if you feel any symptoms of red tide exposure.
• Do not let pets play in or drink from affected bodies of water.
• Follow advice and guidelines from local health officials.
How to view respiratory beach forecasts

- Scientists combine *K. brevis* cells with wind speed/direction data to produce respiratory irritation forecasts for the day.
- These forecasts are communicated to the public via the HABscope website in near real-time, projected over 24 hours and updated with latest wind models every 3 hours.

**VISIT:**
https://habscope.gcoos.org
**Q** Is seafood safe to eat during a HAB outbreak?

**A** Toxins from HABs can accumulate in filter feeders, such as clams and oysters, and may lead to Neurotoxic Shellfish Poisoning in people who consume contaminated shellfish. Shellfish purchased through a licensed dealer or at a restaurant are safe to eat during a HAB as they will have been harvested from waters outside of the bloom area.
**K. Brevis** red tide FAQs

**Q** When do HABs occur and how long do they last?

**A** Florida’s HABs can appear throughout the year, though they usually begin late summer to early fall and can last from a few days to months. Some blooms have lasted over a year.
**K. Brevis red tide FAQs**

**Q** Can HABs be harmful to wildlife? Pets?

**A** Through inhalation, direct contact or ingestion, high concentrations of toxins produced by HABs can harm and kill fish, birds and mammals. Keep pets away from affected waters.
Q What impact do HABs have on the economy?

A HABs can result in significant economic impacts, especially in coastal communities. HABs are estimated to cause more than $20 million in tourism-related losses in Florida each year.
HAB Resources

For more information and resources related to HABs in Florida, visit https://www.flseagrant.org/habs/