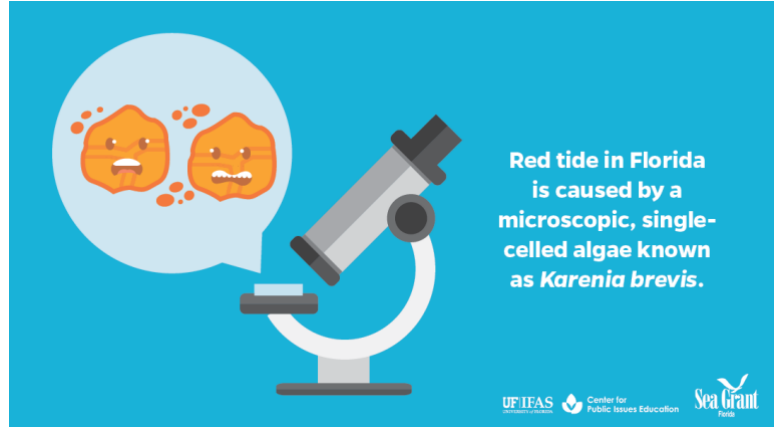


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## Red Tide Informational Messages

Harmful algal blooms (HABs) occur around the world and are caused by many different algal species. In Florida, Red tide is a type of HAB caused by a microscopic, single-celled algae known as *Karenia brevis*, which naturally occurs in the Gulf of Mexico. Not all algal blooms or species are harmful. However, when they can cause damage to humans, ecosystems or the economy are they considered to be harmful algal blooms. Learn more at <https://www.flseagrant.org/habs/>.



Red tides are not uncommon and occur almost annually in the Gulf of Mexico, particularly in the Tampa Bay to Charlotte Harbor region. Florida's Red tides can appear throughout the year, though they usually begin late summer to early fall and can last from a few days to months. Learn more at <https://www.flseagrant.org/habs/>.



Red tides can result in significant economic impacts. HABs are estimated to cause more than \$20 million in tourism-related losses in Florida each year. Additionally, according to the Florida Department of Health, medical expenses and lost workdays associated with harmful algal blooms cost the United States an estimated \$22 million annually. Learn more at <https://www.flseagrant.org/habs/>.



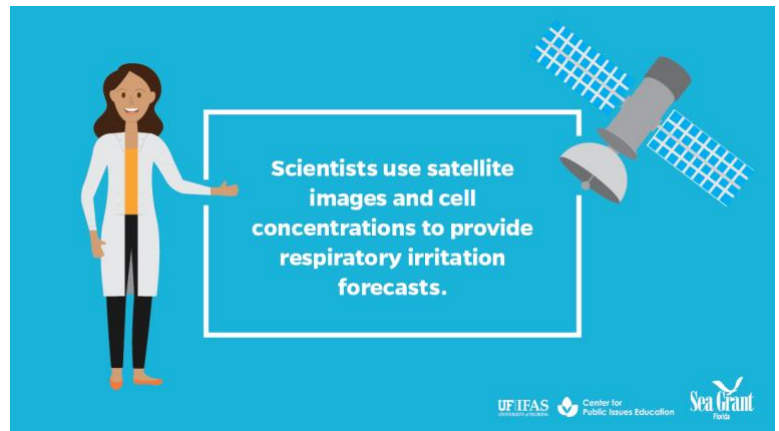
Exposure to toxins produced by red tide can be detrimental to humans, pets and wildlife. Symptoms of HAB exposure in humans include respiratory irritation, itchy eyes and skin irritation. Consumption of contaminated shellfish may also lead to neurologic shellfish poisoning. If you experience any of these symptoms, leave the area immediately.

Learn more at <https://www.flseagrant.org/habs/>.



Scientists combine cell concentrations with wind speed and direction data in order to provide respiratory irritation forecasts for the day. These forecasts are communicated to the public via the **HABscope** website (<https://habscope.gcoos.org>) in near real-time, projected over 24 hours and updated with the latest wind models every three hours.

Learn more at <https://www.flseagrant.org/habs/>.

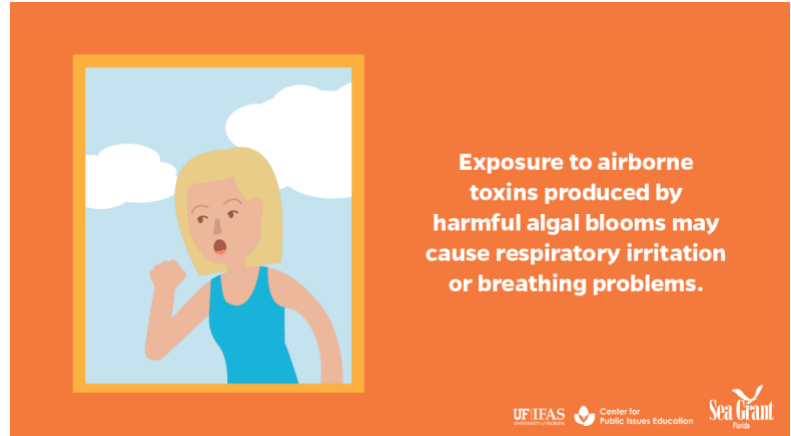


**Post**

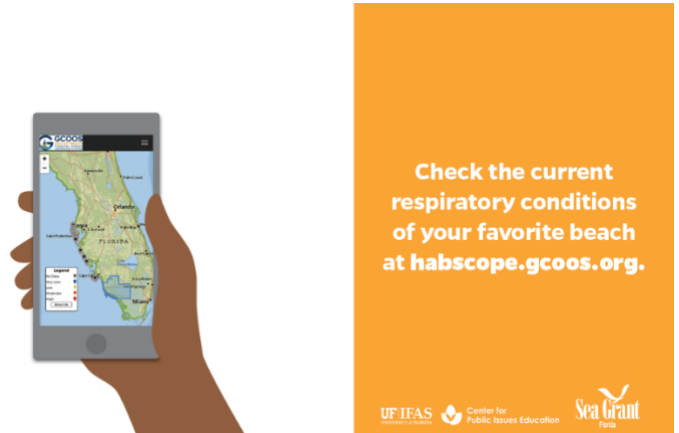
**Graphic**

**Red Tide Emergency Response**

During an active red tide, healthy individuals may experience some irritation from exposure to aerosolized or airborne toxins, but these symptoms typically subside once they leave the impacted area. Individuals with respiratory conditions can experience more severe and prolonged breathing problems, and should avoid areas where blooms are present. Learn more about harmful algal blooms at <https://www.flseagrant.org/habs/>.



Before going to the beach, check respiratory conditions at <https://habscope.gcoos.org>. If the area is experiencing unfavorable respiratory conditions due to a harmful algal bloom, avoid the area or go to a different beach with more favorable conditions. Learn more about harmful algal blooms at <https://www.flseagrant.org/habs/>.



Always follow safety guidelines established by local health officials. During a red tide event, stay up to date on current conditions before going to the beach. Leave the area immediately if you experience respiratory irritation and rinse with fresh water if you feel itchiness in the eyes or skin rashes. Learn more about harmful algal blooms at <https://www.flseagrant.org/habs/>.



Through inhalation, direct contact or ingestion, high concentrations of toxins produced by red tide can harm and kill fish, birds and mammals. Protect your pets by preventing them from playing in or drinking from affected bodies of water. If a pet comes in contact with affected water, wash them immediately, as toxins can remain on their fur.

Learn more at  
<https://www.flseagrant.org/habs/>.

