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TAME THE VIRAL THREAT

S-o-B-i-g, M-y-D-o-o-m, Love Bug- these are the viruses who have in the past wrecked havoc all over the world as giant multinationals and common people alike helplessly witnessed their email system getting clogged, files disappearing without leaving a trace and computers shutting down with a hiccup. The ingenuity and the rapidity of the actions of these viruses often leave people momentarily stunned. Each such attack raises a wave of questions as the computer gurus work out possible measures to stop them and track down the mastermind.

So what are the kinds and varieties of viruses that are striking the computers everyday? Here's a crash course on some forms of viruses. A virus code is written with the intension that it replicates itself and multiplies and sends itself from one computer to another by attaching itself with a host program. A worm is a type of virus, which spreads without any possible action by the user and replicates itself across the network, exhausting both bandwidth and memory. The Trojan Horse is the potent program that has the capacity to cause wide range devastation.

Let's put the basic question first. Why do these viruses affect so many people? Simply put, the users open the mail attachments without cross checking from the sender. The virus programmer plays the part of the perfect conman, who lures the recipient to the trap of opening the attachment. The recipient is made to believe that a friend or an acquaintance has sent the mail. It so happens that often the virus spreads automatically by sending itself to the addresses found in the victim's address book with something in the message body, which resembles a personal note.

But you can easily avoid being a victim in the hands of a potent virus. If one follows some simple steps, then keeping your PC clean is not a problem. First of all the user must have a Firewall for the network connections to log into the Internet with a cable modem, DSL modem or a dial-up modem. However this is best for a single computer and not for the ones with a LAN connection. In that case it is better to use a router to ensure safety as well as convenience of the user.

Security updates must be strictly implemented as soon as they are available. Install the security updates for Windows or Windows components such as the Explorer, Outlook Express and Windows Media Player whenever available. But most importantly you must use the latest anti-virus software and even then update it once a week to feel somewhat safe. The pain is worth the gain. Most of the anti virus programs now have the "Auto Update" option and the software automatically downloads the latest updates whenever the computer is on.

But finally the easiest possible way to avoid the virus is not to fiddle with suspicious or even apparently innocent attachments. You should not at all open any attachment from any stranger and even when it is from a known friend you should ensure from him/her about the content of the attachment. If you have even an iota of suspicion then don't touch it. However your PC cannot be affected by reading the body message.

If you follow these few simple guidelines then your computer has a better chance to remain immune to the viral threat and lead a healthy and cheerful life. So stick to these rules and keep

the pc doctor away. But if it is too late for prevention then [click here](#) for a full range of IT services including virus removal.