



## ***Virus – Spyware? Do you know the Signs?***

**Can you tell if your computer has a Virus or is infected with Spyware?**

**In this article I will give you the signs that will tell you if your computer is infected.**

Knowing the symptoms of a virus infection or spyware infection can save you a lot of pain.

Writing down the symptoms is a great first step in troubleshooting your computer. Take a notepad and write all the weird things that your computer is doing.

Remember, just because you have some of these signs, that doesn't mean you have a virus. Some of these signs also point to hardware issues and/or a issue with one of your programs.

### **☠ Signs that you have a Virus / Spyware / Malware ☠**

- Computer Start-up is very slow.
- Computer runs very slow all the time, programs respond slowly.
- Popup windows pop up even when you don't click on anything.
- Disk Drive Light is constantly flashing, which shows the PC is working in the background to run. Noticeable when you are not using the computer, but its acting like it is working.
- Computer shuts down on its own.
- Programs do not start, or run badly.
- Data Files are missing, damaged, or missing information.



- Music starts playing or pictures open on your computer.
- Computer locks up or freezes and you are not able to do anything but power off.
- Weird Error messages.
- Computer will not boot up.
- Hardware issues, like not printing, keyboard keys not working right, modem issues.
- Anti-Virus program gets disabled and you are not able to get it to work again.
- Internet Explorer Home Page is changed to another website and sometimes you are not able to change it back.
- You may get an Error Message saying you have an virus and to click here to get software that will clean the virus off your PC. This is a common trick, as they are the one's who installed the virus on your computer. They just want you to pay for their software to remove the virus.
- New Icons on your desktop.
- Beware of emails that say you send someone a virus. Friends complain of receiving e-mails from you that are infected with a virus. Sometimes virus makers can forge your e-mail address and send e-mails out to many people that look like they are coming from your computer.
- Beware of e-mails that talk about a virus that is going around and they give examples of where to go to fix it or what to do.



## Great Site that I recommend

Website used to check for information to find out if an e-mail is a Virus Hoax or Real. This website has lots of information about Hoaxes and Urban Legends.

Check Out: Snopes – “Rumor Has It”  
<http://www.snopes.com/computer/virus/virus.asp>

If you start seeing some of these signs, you will need to scan your computer to look for and remove virus activity.

Keep your virus and spyware applications up to date with regular updates and scan your computer at least every week, if not daily.

If you are connected to the internet, then at sometime you will have to deal with viruses/spyware.

*Get prepared now, before your computer is infected.*

**Thomas W. Shay** is a long time Computer Consultant and Help Desk Specialist.

Want to learn more about keeping your computer running fast and error free?

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