



# **CYBER SECURITY AWARENESS**

## **10 sure-fire signs your computer has a virus**

Protect your computer from dangerous malware with our checklist of symptoms and signs that show your computer has a virus.

Viruses are malicious software – known as malware – that can destroy files, steal personal information and damage your computer. Here are the top ten signs your PC has a virus.

### **1. Unexpected pop-up windows**

Unexpected onscreen ads are a typical sign of a virus infection. Not only are they annoying, other malware may lurk inside poised to wreck further havoc.

Never click on a suspicious pop-up – even if it says ‘a virus was detected’. This is an example of rogueware, which asks you to pay for a program to remove a fake virus but may in fact allow even more malware to be downloaded.

### **2. Slow start up and slow performance**

If your PC is taking longer than normal to start or programs are taking ages to open, then your PC may have a virus.

If your computer’s performance is sluggish, check first that it isn’t due to a lack of RAM memory or hard disk space. If not, the culprit may be a virus.

### **3. Suspicious hard drive activity**

An excessively active hard disk where it makes continual noise or constantly spins – even though you’re not using your computer nor have any programs running – can be a sign your PC is infected with a virus.

### **4. Lack of storage space**

If you suddenly find yourself devoid of storage space on your hard drive, a virus may be doing its utmost to make your computer unusable.

### **5. Missing files**

Some malware cause problems by deleting files and programs or moving them around. Some may encrypt your files so you aren’t able to open them.

### **6. Crashes and error messages**

If programs start opening and closing automatically, your system freezes or shuts down for no reason, or you see odd error messages, then you may have a virus infection.

## 7. High network activity

If your internet connection is very active even when you're not using it, a virus may be busy sending information back and forth across the internet.

## 8. Email is hijacked

If friends start receiving emails or instant messages from your social networks asking them to click on an attachment or link, it's likely that a virus is attempting to spread to other computers via your accounts. If so, change your passwords immediately.

## 9. Browser woes

Your web browser becoming sluggish, your home page changing or being redirected to unusual websites are all warning signs of a computer virus infection.

## 10. Security attacks

Some viruses are designed to disable your computer's protection. So, if you can't open or install an anti-virus program or your firewall, your computer may be infected.

## Spot any of these symptoms?

**Install and run an anti-virus software program to remove malware. Then set the software to automatically scan your system on a regular basis and keep it up-to-date to protect against the most recent threats.**

**Ensure your computer firewall is turned on to block malware attacks via the internet.**