***Why do we get virus related problems
even though we have an anti-virus installed?***

There are many reasons for this, computer security is incredibly complex and the types of potential threats is nearly endless. However, the most common problem that I come across has been labelled "spyware". This is technically not a virus, and therefore a traditional anti-virus will not immediately recognise or block it.

A typical spyware attack will usually come after searching the internet for something. While there are certain search words that should be avoided, like "free ..." spyware can come from anywhere, there is just no way to know for sure which sites are infected and which are safe. Sometimes it's obvious when there is a new toolbar or "cleaning program" has been installed, but usually you aren't even aware that anything has changed on your computer. Often these so called cleaning tools are very difficult to get rid of, and usually they start as a free program but eventually ask for your credit card number.

The reason your anti-virus program doesn't stop it, is simply because that's not it's job. Spyware or "Malware" gets into our computers when we visit infected web sites which automatically download programs into our computers without our knowledge. The anti-virus is not going to stop you from visiting those sites.

So what can I do to keep my computer clean? There are only two options, 1) don't go to infected websites or 2) block automatic downloads and installations. Because we don't know which websites to avoid, the only reasonable option is to block the downloads. This is commonly known as "web-filtering".

Some of the larger anti-virus packages include a web-filter, but none of them are perfect. For example Norton 360 and McAfee Internet Security both include some protection against unwanted programs. But for those of us that like free security programs, like AVG, Avast or Panda Cloud, there is no website filtering included.

So what can be done? ***Get a firewall***. I won't go into a long explanation of what a firewall is, simply because it would take too long and it's about as interesting as reading a phone-book. Basically, it's a system of rules that limit programs and connections that want to run on your computer.

Fortunately there is a free firewall that is easy to use and extremely effective, it's called **Comodo Firewall.**

Click here for a free download -
http://www.comodo.com/home/download/download.php?prod=firewall

Extra info for computer geeks ☺

Its Defense+ HIPS performance exceeds commercial products and leads the class, it includes an excellent "memory firewall" feature, and it allows you to quickly switch between Defense+ security modes and

configurations. Includes automatic updates. Installation can automatically configure your PC to use the Comodo SecureDNS (but you can do this without installing CIS).

Additional Features of Interest (as Found in its Interface): Installation mode/training mode, auto updating, built-in help and tips, parental control with password protection, extra themes and languages, and a stealth ports wizard. Purges old or unused firewall/Defense+ policies or unused files (safe files, files waiting for review, etc.). Displays balloon messages for instant logging events.

Comodo Secure DNS is a domain name resolution service that resolves your DNS requests through our worldwide network of redundant DNS servers. This can provide a much faster and more reliable Internet browsing experience than using the DNS servers provided by your ISP and does not require any hardware or software installation. When you choose to use Comodo SecureDNS, your computer's network settings will be changed so that all applications that access the internet will use Comodo SecureDNS servers. Your computer's primary/secondary DNS settings will be changed to 8.26.56.26 and 156.154.70.22.

Comodo Secure DNS gives you a safer, smarter and faster Internet because it's:

More Reliable - Comodo Secure DNS's server infrastructure currently spans 15 locations (nodes) and five continents around the world. This allows Comodo to offer you the most reliable fully redundant DNS service anywhere. Each node has multiple servers and is connected by several Tier 1 carriers to the Internet.

Faster - Comodo uses strategically placed nodes are located at the most optimal intersections of the Internet. Unlike most DNS providers, the Comodo our request routing technology means that no matter where you are located in the world, your DNS requests are answered by the closest available set of servers, resulting in information becoming available faster and more reliably than ever before.

Smarter - Comodo's highly structured DNS system and guide pages get you where you want to be, when you inadvertently attempt to go to a site that doesn't exist. Parked' or 'not in use' domains are automatically detected and forwarded.

Safer - As a leading provider of computer security solutions, Comodo is keenly aware of the dangers that plague the Internet today. SecureDNS helps users keep safe online with its malware domain filtering feature. SecureDNS references a real-time block list (RBL) of harmful websites (i.e. phishing sites, malware sites, spyware sites, and parked domains that may contain excessive advertising including pop-up and/or pop-under advertisements, etc.) and will warn you whenever you attempt to access a site containing potentially threatening content. Additionally, our 'name cache invalidation' solution signals the Comodo Secure DNS recursive servers whenever a DNS record is updated - fundamentally eliminating the concept of a TTL. Directing your requests through highly secure servers can also reduce your exposure to the DNS Cache Poisoning attacks that may affect everybody else using your ISP.

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