

AntiVirus Warning

By Dawn Gray

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It is a sad day when the antivirus software messes up your computer more than the @\$& virus you got in yesterday's email. The more complex antivirus software gets, the more it becomes like a virus itself. In honor of my recent discovery of a new problem with my antivirus program, here are a few pitfalls of popular (and not so popular) programs:

1. "Norton Crash Guard crashes my computer."

This is the first problem I noticed with Symantec's popular suite of computer protective software. Norton Crash Guard immediately forced my brother's new Compaq computer even with errors that would normally just shut down the program involved. (That was just the worse case.)

On other computers, loading Crash Guard slowed down the computer so much I felt compelled to take it off.

2. "Norton AntiVirus is keeping me from accessing the internet."

When I first installed Norton AntiVirus, I had to call our internet service provider AND Eudora in order to access email again. It turns out the program tries to route all email through their server to check for viruses. You have to go into your preferences and reset them in a way that will work with your internet service provider.

I'm not the only one, either! I recently received a message from a direct mail guru who said he was offline for almost 12 hours because he loaded Norton AntiVirus to delete a virus he inadvertently picked up from an email message.

3. "Norton Systemworks is slowing down my computer."

My Dad recently took a computer in because it was having

some problems. The technician told him they recommended everyone uninstall the Norton Systemworks computer monitor (the little window that tells you how much your drive is fragmented, how much of your CPU you're using, etc.).

They claim the little box does nothing Windows doesn't already and slows your computer down 10%! (I believe them. I remember how much faster the computers were before we loaded it, and my computer at home has been fine without it.)

4. "Internet Explorer (IE) won't work!"

This was my big problem for over a year. It started (coincidentally) about the same time I loaded Netscape 4.7. I've heard of other people having problems with Netscape and IE on the same computer, so I assumed Netscape was the problem.

I tried installing Netscape and re-installing it. I tried uninstalling IE and re-installing it. Nothing worked.

Sunday night, my antivirus program (Aladdin's E-Safe Desktop) gave me an error when IE accidentally popped up. I unloaded the program, and IE started to work! I don't know why I didn't think of it before. I uninstalled the program and now IE works fine.

IE has ActiveX, a language that has been found capable of delivering viruses, and Microsoft is constantly using it to send update information to users. My virus protection software shut down the program for my computer's own good!

5. "What about McAfee?"

Well, maybe McAfee is better. It's been working okay on my computer for about a week now. However, I've heard horror stories about them from some of my subscribers as well! In the past, I've had problems with updates.

"There's always hope!"

I polled my subscribers about the best antivirus solutions, and Trend Software's PC-Cillian won. You can download their software (priced competitively with Norton's AntiVirus and McAfee's Virus Shield at <http://www.trend.com/>

One subscriber also recommended a free solution: AVG anti-virus from <http://www.grisoft.com>

Good luck!

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