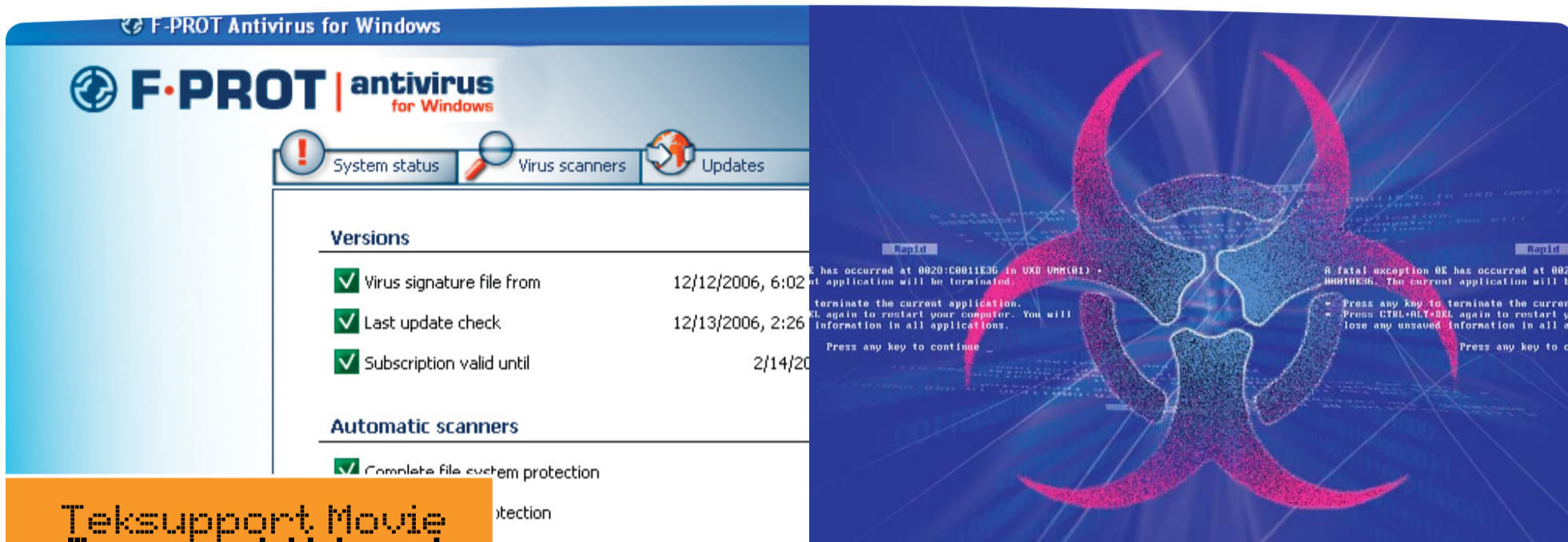


Don't delay - call the doctor today

Hands up those of you who have had a computer virus? Your computer may be infected at the moment without your knowledge. These days computer viruses are not as malicious as the horror stories of the 80's and 90's where data was deleted from your computer while you watched. These days it is more likely to be a sneaky program running in the background uploading data to a central server, or using your computer as an illegal file server without your knowledge (I have seen both of these in the last couple of years - they do happen).

There are some tell-tale signs of computer viruses which can be easy to spot - think of it as a normal virus. When I have flu, my body aches, I feel run down, I sneeze. The analogy is still valid. The computer runs slowly, it is using more resources, and it doesn't respond the way it should do. These symptoms may not be virus related (your computer's memory may be broken, you may be asking too much of it for an old computer, or it may need good old-fashioned preventative maintenance), but it's good to check with a professional anyway.

How did I get the virus? This is the first question that is asked when I tell someone their computer's infected. Normally these days this is due to some code inadvertently downloaded from the internet, either spread by email, or downloaded accidentally when the user installs some software. Other mechanisms are spread by USB memory sticks (schools are always a prolific source of viruses!), or allowed through security exploits in the operating system or browsers.

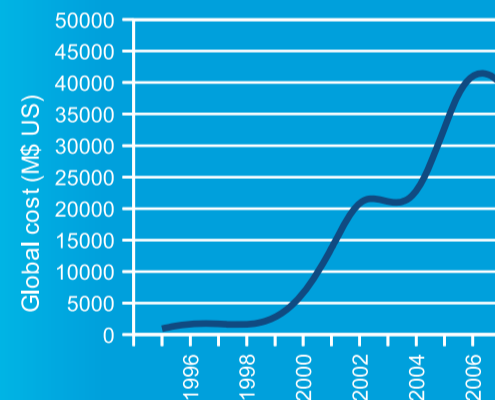


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Enter code: TK0709
Where required



Graph showing cost in Millions of US dollars from disruption caused by computer viruses



What can I do to stop it?

- Have a good anti-virus product
 - Teksupport is a re-seller of F-Prot which costs around \$5 per year per computer. It's cheap and fast.
- Update your anti-virus software regularly
 - Check that the licence has not expired and that automatic updates are occurring.
- Don't click on any pop ups that you don't understand, and don't blindly allow browsers to run code like active-X without your permission
 - Don't lock your door & leave your window wide open!
- Use a secure operating system
 - Microsoft operating systems are the most insecure with 98% of all viruses running

on these systems. TekSupport's firewall TIGs run FreeBSD which is the foundation of the Mac operating system for this very reason.

- Check that XP or Vista is getting regular security updates and apply them! - If you are unable to use a more secure operating system then make sure they are being patched for security holes.
- Use a secure browser - IE is at risk 78% of the time, whereas Firefox is only at risk for 2%.
- Get a good firewall and lock it down - we can help with both of these with our TIG product and our security expertise.

With a proper backup regime, data loss is not the main issue with computer viruses. The main cost to businesses is the loss productivity that infected computers cause. Like spam email, a slow computer can add hours to wasted time in the office, and hours of time could be spent tracking down and removing a virus. These days, computer viruses are becoming more difficult at removal as they embed themselves all over your computer. 3-6 hours is common to remove a virus from a server or desktop machine, 5 years ago it would be clean in an hour. The cost of computer viruses is on the increase. We can help with all aspects of virus problems, call the doctor - prevention is better than the cure.

contact us

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