MALWARE

Malicious software (malware) are programs or applications that disrupt or damage the normal operation of a computer or electronic file system. Malware can masquerade as something innocuous, but will hide a virus, worm, Trojan horse program, spyware, or other harmful program that gets installed on a system. Most malware has a single purpose: to access confidential data or other valuable information for the cybercriminals that created it.

Many malware programs succeed by exploiting vulnerabilities in the software running on a computer. That’s why it’s critical to run up-to-date antivirus and antimalware programs, as well as maintaining security updates and patches for operating system software and applications.

AVOIDING COMMON MALWARE THREATS

- Malware is often sent as an email attachment or link. Don’t open any attachment or click on any link unless you know the sender and are expecting the attachment.
- Downloading a program from a website that you don’t know can sometimes get you more than you bargained for. Check with your IT support team before downloading any new program.
- Don’t be misled by messages that warn you of an immediate threat to your computer’s security and urge you to click on a link. These are almost always false, and will usually install malware on your system. When in doubt, check with IT support.
- Website special offers and promotions that seem too good to be true almost always are. Clicking on one of these can automatically install malware without you even knowing.

SIGNS OF A MALWARE ATTACK

- Clicking on a link or opening an attachment that doesn’t behave as expected can be a sign that it is intended to deliver malware. If you see this behavior, contact IT support.
- If a computer begins to run slowly or respond erratically, it may be infected with some type of malware.
- Some malware is designed to use the email program of a host computer to send infected messages. If recipients report strange messages from your email address, this may be a sign of malware infection.
- Internet pop-up windows and browsers that direct you to websites you didn’t intend to visit can also be warning signs of malware.

For further information on maintaining a culture of preparedness, consult your Preparis portal. Contact your Customer Success representative at csteam@preparis.com for more information on this or any other threat.