

## Re: Startup virus: infinite Help and Support Center execution

**Source:** <http://www.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/microsoft.public.security.virus/2004-09/1312.html>

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Marik Clemens wrote:

> *I have a virus that will execute the windows help and  
> support center on booting up to 400 times at which point  
> my system runs out of memory and all processing power is  
> used up by requests for more memory. I have done a  
> complete reformat of my hard drive and the same thing  
> happened on the first boot after i installed windows. None  
> of the antivirus software i have tried has been able to  
> detect anything, and windows just replaces the help  
> program if I delete it. I know the problem is external  
> to the support center itself because i have disabled it  
> in the boot configuration and still get errors  
> complaining that the program can't be found. If anyone  
> has any idea where to look for the infected files, please  
> post, as I have run out of ideas. TIA.*

What antivirus software are you running? Was the computer connected to the Internet after the first boot after the clean install? Does the computer only have one hard drive in it? Here are a few suggestions for your troubleshooting:

Assuming your computer has only the one hard drive, boot it with your official (not a burned copy) Windows operating system disk (I'm assuming you have XP – if you don't, please tell me).

If your computer has a second hard drive in it where you keep your data, unplug that hard drive. Perhaps you have infected data on that drive.

Go into the installation routine and delete all partitions. Create the partitions you want. Format all partitions. Go ahead and clean install Windows, making sure the computer is *\*not\** connected to the Internet. If you need to install third-party drivers at any time during or right after the installation, make sure you scan the disk with those drivers with an updated av on a known-clean computer.

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After the installation is completed, is everything OK now on first boot?  
If so, do *\*not\** connect to the Internet or add anything else until you have patched Windows – apply updates that you have downloaded from another, known-clean machine and burn to cd-r – *\*and\** installed a current av and updated it. Again, download all necessary updated virus definitions on a different, known-clean machine. Install a firewall. Is everything still OK?

Now make sure you scan everything you are going to add to that computer first. Perhaps you were transferring some of your data from a cd-r and it was infected.

Post back with more information based on the above suggestions and let us know what happened and if you need more help.

Malke

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MS MVP - Windows Shell/User  
Elephant Boy Computers  
[www.elephantboycomputers.com](http://www.elephantboycomputers.com)  
"Don't Panic!"