

# Vetech View



## Internet Security

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### Are You At Risk?

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#### Inside:

- Internet Security
- Lab Interface
- Biography
- Humor

With the Internet becoming easier and less expensive to access, more and more of our customers are now “on-line” with their computers at the practice. For the most part this is a wonderful thing for your Advantage software. You can receive e-mail updates for your software, you can upload/download data to troubleshoot a problem you may be having. You can use e-mail as a communication tool to your clients. It’s also possible for our support staff to actually login to your system to download data or troubleshoot a problem.

Internet access does come with some consequences however and you need to take proper steps with your system if you have computers online. We are starting to receive more and more calls from users that have gotten computer viruses, spyware, and intrusions by hackers.

Most security problems are easily preventable by having basic protection in place. When a big story breaks about a “new” virus attack or Windows “security flaw” it is typically something that was easily preventable with some simple steps.

#### Internet Protection – The Essentials

There are books written on Internet security, so it’s impossible to go into much depth in a newsletter, but here are some essential tools you need to have if your computers are on the Internet. Anti-Virus software, Spyware software, and a firewall should be installed on any computer with an Internet connection. Following is a brief overview of each.

You should also investigate what some of the major software security companies such as Microsoft, Symantec, McAfee, Zone Labs, etc. have to say.

**Anti-Virus Software:** This is a must for any computer accessing the Internet, especially computers that use e-mail. Viruses are typically embedded in e-mails and install themselves without your knowledge. Anti-virus software should be installed on your computer and you **need to subscribe to your vendors automatic update service!** New viruses are introduced daily. Typically virus software is updated on a weekly basis. It does you very little good to purchase anti-virus software and not keep it updated.

**Firewalls:** Firewalls prevent unauthorized users from accessing your computer through your Internet connection. Firewalls can be a hardware device such as a router (recommended) or software, or both a hardware firewall and software firewall. The current version of Windows XP includes a built-in firewall. This is not as customizable and powerful as products from Norton and Zone Labs, but is a huge improvement over doing nothing.

Typically firewalls are configured once and do not need to be updated on a regular basis like anti-virus software.

**Adware & SpyWare:** These products have received a lot of attention recently. Adware and



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We're on the Web!  
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spyware programs get installed on your computer without your knowledge when you visit web sites or install other programs. These programs have the ability to scan systems or monitor activity and relay information to other computers or locations on the Internet. Among the information that may be actively or passively gathered and disseminated by spyware: passwords, log-in details, account numbers, personal information, individual files or other personal documents.

Spyware may also gather and distribute information related to the user's computer, applications running on the computer, Internet browser usage, or other computing habits. There are a number of low cost or free anti-spyware programs available, including a free product from Microsoft. Similar to anti-virus software, anti-spyware software should be updated on a regular basis, or it is not very valuable.

### Lab Interface update

VETECH is currently testing a new interface with Idexx lab equipment. This interface allows Idexx equipment to be connected with a cable to a computer running Advantage software and lab test results can be imported into a patient medical record quickly. If you own Idexx equipment and would like to try this, please contact our office.



### Biography

Terry Fisk has been with the Vetech team since 2001. Her experience in the veterinary field has made her a valuable asset. Terry's veterinary background includes 17 years as a receptionist and office manager for a large 24 hour AAHA practice in Southern California. As a Vetech team member she wears many

hats, including software consultant, telephone and onsite staff onsite staff training, graphic design and trade show demonstrations.

Terry is a native Californian and an avid animal lover. Her hobbies previously involved training and showing Appaloosa and Tennessee Walking horses. Her current focus is training and competing with her Australian Shepherds in agility, herding and rally obedience and with her German Shepherds in the sport of schutzhund. In her "spare" time Terry enjoys web design, fishing and gardening.

### That's One Big Cat

