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HOW TO PROTECT COMPUTER FROM VIRUSES

Today we use internet-connected devices in all spheres of our lives. We go online to search for information, shop, bank and stay in touch with family and friends through social networking. As a result, our devices contain a heaps of personal information about us. By using safety measures and good practices to protect your devices, you can protect your privacy and your family.

Antivirus software protects your device from viruses that can destroy your data, slow down or crash your device, or allow spammers to send email through your account.

A firewall is a software program or piece of hardware that blocks hackers from entering and using your computer. Hackers search the internet the way some telemarketers automatically dial random phone numbers. They send out pings (calls) to thousands of computers and wait for responses. Firewalls prevent your computer from responding to these random calls. A firewall blocks communications to and from sources you don't permit.

Protect your devices and accounts from intruders by choosing passwords that are hard to guess. Use strong passwords with at least eight characters, a combination of letters, numbers and special characters.

Many social media, email, and financial accounts allow the use of stronger authentication methods. These methods can include a fingerprint recognition, one-

time codes sent to a mobile device, or other means that ensure users to have a secure access to their account.

Social media allows sharing of all aspects of life, but it's important to control who has access to the information you share. Information thieves can use social media postings to gather information and then use the information to hack into other accounts or for identity theft. To protect yourself, make use of privacy settings to limit the visibility of personal posts to your personal networks, and restrict the amount of information you share with the general public.