

# Why You Should Microchip Your Pet

Microchips are basically sophisticated identity collars and an increasing number of responsible pet owners are choosing to have their pets' microchipped.

Most statistics reveal that more than 50% of microchipped dogs are returned to their owner, compared to varying figures of between 20-30% of non-microchipped dogs. It's good news for cat owners too as again substantially more microchipped felines are being returned to their families. Here we are going to answer some of the most frequently asked questions about microchipping your pet.

## **Does microchipping hurt?**

In short, no. Microchipping your pet is a simple and quick procedure that doesn't require any anesthesia. The microchip comes preloaded in a sterilized applicator that is injected into the loose part of skin between your pet's shoulder blades.

The entire process usually takes less than two minutes and should hurt no more than a routine booster shot.

## **Are there any side effects to microchipping?**

Just like when your pet has a booster shot, the injection site may be a little tender for a day or so and you should avoid stroking your pet there in case it causes them discomfort.

Occasionally there have been reports of microchips 'migrating' in the body. This is very rare, and they can be removed in a small procedure if it becomes a problem.

There have been some concerns that microchipping causes cancer in animals. However there is not enough scientific evidence to support this, particularly as many studies on microchipped animals have been done on mice, who do not share the same biological system as dogs or cats.

What we do know is that the known benefits of microchipping currently outweigh the possible risks.

## **How much does microchipping cost?**

The average cost to have the chip implanted is around \$45 and usually includes registration on to a pet recovery database. However many pet associations and charities offer reduced price microchipping for responsible pet owners on a budget. Ask your veterinarian for more details.

If you are adopting from a shelter or purchasing a pup/kitten from a breeder then you will need to check and see if your new pet already has a microchip in place. If so you will need to make sure the chip is up to date with your personal information. If your pet isn't already microchipped then you should arrange for this to be done as soon as possible.

## **How often do I need to get my pet microchipped?**

The microchip itself is made of biocompatible material that should not break down over time, meaning that it should last for the lifetime of your pet.

If you have any concerns or worries about the chip working correctly you can ask your veterinarian to scan and check it at your pet's routine appointment.

## **Does this mean I can get rid of my pet's collar or ID tags?**

No, absolutely not. Microchipping should not be a replacement for collars and ID tags but merely a backup in case they get come off. After all, it will be far easier for a neighbor to call the number on the tag than take your pet to a veterinarian to have the chip scanned and read.