

Why Microchip?

Each year thousands of lost and abandoned animals are taken in by shelters and humane societies across North America. Some of these animals never make it home because they can't be identified.

Microchipping offers pet owners the only truly permanent method of identifying your pet and linking the animal back to you, the owner. Collar tags can break or become unreadable and tattooing can become illegible. So, if you want to improve your pet's chances of getting home fast and safe in case it were to go missing, microchipping is your best option.

Four Reasons to Microchip Your Pet

- Only true permanent method of pet identification
- Best chance of your pet returning to you after going missing
- Quick and painless procedure, similar to vaccination
- Lasts for the lifetime of your pet

Frequently Asked Questions

What are microchips?

Microchips are tiny transponders, about the size of a grain of rice, that use radio frequency waves to transmit information about your pet. They're implanted just under the skin,, usually right between the shoulder blades.

How do they work?

Each microchip contains a registration number and the phone number of the registry for the particular brand of chip. A handheld scanner reads the radio frequency of the chip and displays this information. The animal shelter or vet clinic that finds your pet can contact the registry to get your name and phone number. Can a microchip get lost inside my pet?

Does microchipping hurt the animal?

Animal microchips are about the size of a grain of rice and are typically implanted by a vet just beneath the surface of the skin between the shoulder blades. The process is similar to receiving vaccination through a needle and is painless to pets. Most animals don't even react when the microchip is implanted. Once implanted the microchip remains between the shoulder blades just beneath the skin for the rest of the animal's lifetime, becoming a permanent form of identification.

Your pet's subcutaneous tissue usually bonds to the chip within 24 hours, preventing it from moving, although there's a small chance that the chip could migrate. But it can't actually get lost inside your pet.

How long do microchips last?

Microchips are designed to work for 25 years.

Where can I get my pet microchipped?

Many veterinarians and some animal shelters implant microchips for a small fee. This is done with a large-bore needle and doesn't require anesthesia. **But—and this is very important—just getting a microchip isn't enough—you also need to register your pet with the microchip company.**

How do I register my pet?

Complete the paperwork that comes with the chip and send it to the registry, or do it online if that option is available. Some companies charge a one-time registration fee while others charge an annual fee. You'll also receive a tag for your pet's collar with the chip number and registry phone number.

Are there different types of chips?

Yes, and that used to be a problem. Competing microchip companies use different frequencies to send signals to scanners, and until recently there was no universal scanner that could read all the different frequencies. That was a problem if a pet had a microchip that a scanner couldn't detect.

Many microchip companies now produce universal scanners and provide them to animal shelters and animal control agencies at no or very low cost. If your local shelters don't have scanners, they can contact some of the major manufacturers to ask about getting one.

Are there different registries?

Yes, and that, too, used to be problematic. Different chip companies maintained separate databases. Now, some chip companies will register pets with any brand of chip. Also, the American Microchip Advisory Council is working to develop a network of the registry databases to streamline the return of pets to their families.

My dog always wears a collar and tags why do I need to microchip it?

Collars and tags can be removed or get lost and tattooing can become illegible over time. Microchips are the only truly permanent method of identifying your dog. It lasts for the lifetime of the pet.

I have a cat – should I microchip it?

Cats are naturally curious and unpredictable. In the event that your cat strays away from the safety of your home a microchip registered with 24PetWatch Microchip is your cat's best chance of a fast return.

Can a microchip replace my pet's collar and tags?

Despite advances in universal scanners and registry procedures, microchips aren't foolproof, and you shouldn't rely on them exclusively to protect your pet. Universal scanners can detect a competing company's chip, but they may not be able to read the data. And if shelter or vet clinic personnel don't use the scanner properly, they may fail to detect a chip.

What if I move?

You need to contact the company that registers the chip to update your information; otherwise, the chip will be useless. You may be charged a small fee to process the update.

What do I do if I adopt a pet who's already been microchipped?

If you know what brand of chip your pet has, contact the corresponding registry to update the information. If you don't know what type of chip your pet has, find a vet or animal shelter that can read it.

Sources: [Humane Society of the United States](#)
[24PetWatch Microchip](#)