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## **Pet Microchips - A Do or a Don't?**

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If you are worried about losing your pet, new technology allows for biologically safe microchips to use in the place of, or in addition to the classic dog tags. Microchips are an excellent option for a form of identification, and it is rapidly becoming popular in families throughout the country. Here are a few answers to common questions people might ask in relation to the use of these microchips.

What exactly is a microchip? A microchip is a small device that is comparable in size to a grain of rice. This device has a special identification number that helps animal shelters and local humane societies get in touch with the pet's owner.

How does this microchip work? As stated earlier, a microchip has a specific I.D. number, which allows shelters and humane societies get in touch with the pet's owner. The I.D. number is transmitted through an all-purpose handheld scanner, which relays the number to a computer screen. The handheld device transmits radio waves at a frequency of 125 kHz, which is completely safe and non-harmful to your pet. Depending on the brand of the microchip (the two most common brands are AVID and HomeAgain), the animal shelter or humane society will go to the registered microchip databases, and they will either contact you or the microchip company should your pet be found.

Where do they place this microchip? On cats and dogs, the microchip is placed in the fleshy part between the shoulder blades on their back. They cannot feel the microchip, and once it is in, it should give them no problems.

Could my pet have an allergic reaction to a microchip? It is highly unlikely. The microchip is made out of an outer shell of extremely tough glass, and has safe biological contents inside. Because of the way the chip is made, your pet will quickly develop connective tissue that keeps the chip in place.

How is the microchip inserted? The microchip is simply administered like a shot. Though the syringe may be slightly larger than that of a common vaccine shot, it will not hurt any more or any less. Your pet will not react any differently than they would if they were receiving a routine shot. Anesthesia is not necessary, nor is it recommended for this procedure.

What kind of animals can be microchipped? Almost any animal! The most common uses are dogs, cats, birds, horses (other livestock, such as pigs, sheep, or cows), and even fish! Many farmers or animal breeders microchip their animals as an easy form of identification; this takes the place of branding or tagging.

You never know when a natural disaster may befall your area. With hurricane Katrina and earthquakes, many animals have been misplaced and lost their homes. With the aid of a microchip, thousands of pets have been reunited with their loving families.

Microchips are safe, beneficial, and the cost is definitely worth the security of knowing your pet has a chance of being found should they become lost. === *Melissa Turner writes article about various pet related topics. Her articles and information can be seen on sites such as: Dog-Bed.org, LVE Productions and Dog Training Methods.*