

## Bringing FiFi and Butch Home: Microchips Provide Another Link For Lost Pets

As a pet owner, one of your worst nightmares is losing your pet and never finding it. A proper collar, tags and identification provide the best safeguard for most missing animals, but another inexpensive device offers even more support in making sure Butch and FiFi can make it back home. Use of pet microchips is rapidly increasing by veterinarians, pet owners and breeders worldwide. Microchips deliver another link to help reconnect pets and owners.



### The Numbers Aren't Pretty

Statistics show one in three pets will become lost at some point in their lives. Over 10 million dogs and cats are lost or stolen yearly, according to the American Humane Association. 8 million of these animals annually will end up in shelters without being returned home.

### Improving Your Odds

The bottom line is this: more pets with microchips are returned to their owners than pets without microchips. According to the Journal of American Veterinarian Medical Association, from data collected at 53 animal shelters in the United States, dogs without microchips were returned to their owners 21.9% of the time while microchipped dogs were returned to their owners 52.2% of the time.

### Pet Microchip 101

Usually about the size as a grain of rice, this capsule of bioglass is implanted with a special syringe under the skin between a dog's shoulder blades. The needle compares to one used for a blood draw, so pain should be minimal. Implantation by a veterinarian of this less than \$50 device remains the best option for permanent identification. Anti-migration features keep this radio-frequency identification transponder secure in the tissue. The chip stores a unique 9 or 15-digit ID number linking to a pet parent's contact information. A scanner passed over the chip picks up the radio frequency signal and displays the unique number. A call to a microchip registry can retrieve the pet owner's contact information. No personal owner information is revealed. The ID number links only to the owner's data.

Microchips, with a lifespan of 25 years, emit no energy and are only active if scanned. A microchip needs no battery and does not have to be charged. Unlike collars or tags which can be removed, a microchip will not fall off, be scratched or come off of a pet. The **ADEQID® microchips** have the 134.2 kHz frequency and is available in a standard and mini size at Lambert Vet Supply.

Three different radio frequencies have been used in the United States for pet microchips: 125 kHz, 128 kHz, and 134.2 kHz. The 134.2 kHz is also used in Europe and recognized as the international standard with its 15-digit code. Only a universal scanner can read ALL frequencies of a microchip. Otherwise, scanners must match the radio frequency.

### Registration Makes a Difference

Once a pet is microchipped, the owner must register the code on a database. Some are free, like Found Animals, but the new microchip packaging should supply information about registries. Many will charge an initial fee or an update charge later. It is important to remember to update your information in the database. Incorrect information can hinder reuniting you with your pet.

Although a collar with up-to-date identification is the first place people look when a pet is found, an implanted microchip is the best backup plan. The low cost, ease of placement and peace of mind it gives will help bring FiFi and Butch home if they were to get lost.

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