

## Pet Microchipping Recommended

**Procedure increases the odds of lost cats being reunited with their owners.**

The California Veterinary Medical Association is recommending that owners microchip their pets, since microchip implants increase the likelihood of lost pets being reunited with their owners.

A lost pet can sit in the shelter for days without proper identification, and in all too many cases is never reunited with its family. When the pet receives a microchip, its owner is providing a ticket back home, said Eric Weigand, DVM, president of the California Veterinary Medical Association.

The procedure can be especially helpful since some pets lose their collars and tags during the time between escaping and being taken to an animal shelter.

The procedure does not affect the animals physically or behaviorally. During a hospital visit, a veterinarian injects the microchip -- which is about the size of a grain of rice -- between the pet's shoulder blades.

The chip is permanently embedded with a unique identifier that contains information that can be read when scanned with an electronic reader.

Microchips are found to be more efficient and beneficial than pet tattoos. Tattoos can be altered or hard to find and read if the pet is frightened or has a heavy hair coat. However, microchips provide a permanent form of identification for pets, as long as pet owners keep their veterinarian updated with any changes to their contact information. Posted: April 12, 2006, 5:00 a.m. EST