

Cat ID Tags Can Be Lifesavers

Cat identification tags are a necessity for all cats.

More than one million pets are lost or stolen each year in the United States and one in three pets will get lost during their lifetimes, according to data from the California Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA). Also, without pet identification, 90 percent don't get home.

The California Veterinary Medical Association emphasizes cat identification (ID) tags as lifesavers for pets.

"Unfortunately, many stories of lost or stolen pets don't end happily unless there is a simple way of identifying a pet. The CVMA recommends that animals wear collars and tags and have microchips as a means of permanent identification," CVMA President Ron Faoro, DVM, said.

Identification tags should include: Cat's name Owner's name and address Telephone numbers (day and evening)
Medical history Veterinarian's name and number Current rabies vaccination and licensing information

Pet supply catalogs and stores, veterinary offices and animal shelters often have forms to order cat ID tags.

Owners can speak to their veterinarians about microchipping, which involves implanting a tiny electronic capsule under the cat or kitten's skin. However, a microchip cannot be seen, so the average person may be unaware it is there. Also, not all scanners recognize all microchips.

The CVMA recommends both collar tags and microchips for pets. Tattooing is a third alternative, which is not considered as effective because it can fade and change as a young cat grows.

In addition to cat ID tags and microchips, the CVMA offers these tips to ensure your pet is kept safe:

When filling out lost reports or crafting a newspaper ad, flyer or poster, remember to include the following: Photo of your cat Cat's name Cat's breed Cat's sex Cat's color(s) Additional information: when and where it was last seen; any medications it needs

Also, when your lost cat is returned, have your local veterinarian examine it thoroughly for injuries or signs of illness.