



# Lose your **WORRY** not your **PET.**

**FACT:** Lost pets who arrive at shelters without identification can be kept for as few as 3 days before being euthanized or placed for adoption. (HSSM keeps pets for 5 days).

**FACT:** Number of pets euthanized in the U.S. each year—3 to 6 million. It is believed that many of these animals have owners wishing to find them.

**FACT:** One study showed that only 8% of lost dogs came home on their own.

**FACT:** As few as 7% of cats without microchips are reunited with their owners at shelters.

**FACT:** Top 5 Most Commonly Lost Breeds of Dog:  
1) Labrador Retriever. 2) Chihuahua 3) Pit Bull  
4) Mixed Breed 5) German Shepherd

## **What is a Microchip?**

A pet microchip is a tiny computer chip in a special glass case—it is about as long as piece of rice, but slightly thinner. The chip has a random number on it that can be read with a scanner. This random number links to a file at the microchip company that contains your personal information. Most shelters, Animal Control Officers, and vets scan pets for chips to help them get back home.

## **How does a Microchip work?**

Many people confuse pet microchips with tracking devices. Microchips cannot actually be used to pinpoint the location of a pet who is roaming loose. Microchips are more like internal i.d. tags that can be used to identify pets who are brought to shelters, vets, or are picked up by animal control anywhere in the U.S. and even in many places abroad. Microchips store a number which is matched to the owner's file at the microchip company—this allows owners to store much more information than a traditional tag, including alternate numbers. This also means that rather than "rewriting" the information on the chip when owners move or get a new phone number, all they have to do is go online or call the microchip company to instantly update their information. In a crisis, this flexibility to add, subtract, or change contact information remotely and rapidly can save a lost pet's life!

## **What happens when a microchipped pet is found?**

- 1) HSSM, Animal Control, and most vets scan the pet for a microchip.
- 2) When we find a chip, we call the microchip company and give them the chip number.
- 3) The microchip company looks up the owner's information. If the information has been kept current, the owner will be contacted immediately.
- 4) The owner, who is usually very relieved, comes to pick up their missing pet!

## **How is a pet microchipped?**

Trained technicians use a small syringe-like device, with a hollow needle just like the ones used for giving vaccinations—no need for appointments or surgery. Many pets do not notice that the microchip is being inserted, while others respond to it as they would to a vaccination. The needle is inserted into the loose skin on the back of the pet's neck, and the microchip slides right under the pet's skin—it takes about 5 seconds. The chip is tiny, so the pet can't feel it, and it's encased in a special glass that will attach to the pet's tissues, so it won't slide around and get "lost."

## **Is it safe?**

Microchips are very safe for your pet and your information. The chip has no internal power source (it gets a little charge from the scanner when it passes over) and emits no radiation or chemicals. Millions of pets have been chipped with virtually no problems or side effects reported!

Your personal information is also protected by your pet's microchip. Unlike a tag, the only data on the chip is a random number and only vets, shelters, animal control, and labs have permission to use that number to get their contact information. Owners can also opt to have only the microchip company contact them in the event that their pet is ever found by a third-party.

## **How do I get my pet microchipped?**

Simply bring your pet to HSSM's Surrender Department during normal business hours—no appointment needed. Your pet will be microchipped while you wait and we will file your information with the company. Our fee for this service is \$20.00 and there is currently no annual subscription fee. You can also take your pet to their regular veterinarian for microchipping.



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