

Companion Animal Identification

Position:

The Edmonton Humane Society supports and encourages the use of identification such as microchips, tags, and tattoos in companion animals. Permanent identification (microchips and tattoos) should be applied in a humane manner by a veterinarian or under veterinary supervision.

Summary

- Identification poses minimal risk to companion animals and increases the likelihood of reunification should an animal become lost.
- Information on all forms of identification should be checked for accuracy regularly and updated whenever necessary.

Rationale

- Identification such as microchips, tags, and tattoos increase the likelihood of lost companion animals returning to owners. The use of multiple forms of identification is recommended.
- Microchips are strongly recommended as they are not prone to fading or being physically separated from an animal.
- Guardians should ensure their pet's microchip is most effective by having current contact information registered and including a scan during veterinary visits to confirm the microchip's location and that it is functional.
- Identification promotes reunification of lost animals. In a study by Lord it was found that when stray animals brought to a shelter were microchipped pets and owners were reunited approximately 73% of the time.
- Identification is beneficial to all animals, as even animals who are primarily indoor pets may escape by accident.
- The likelihood of an adverse reaction to microchip implantation is low.
- Identification and licensing of pets with local bylaw are strongly recommended as strategies for increasing the chances of reunification with lost pets.

References

1. British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. "Identification of Companion Animals" BC SPCA position statement, Vancouver, 2015.
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3. Humane Canada. "Pet Identification" Humane Canada Position Statements, n.d.
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6. Weiss, Emily et al. "Frequency of Lost Dogs and Cats in the United States and the Methods Used to Locate Them." *Animals : an open access journal from MDPI* vol. 2,2 301-15. 13 Jun. 2012, doi:10.3390/ani2020301
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