Even the most well-behaved dog or a strictly indoor cat could be at risk of slipping through an open door, clawing through window screens or climbing over a backyard fence. While we hope these pets return to their homes, there is a very real probability that the longer they wander unidentified, the more unlikely that becomes.

Ensuring your pet has proper identification can determine whether or not your lost pet is returned home safely. The OVMA recommends keeping your pets properly tagged by following these recommendations:

- **Make sure your pet wears** a collar and ID tag at all times.
- **Imprint all contact information**—including your name, your pet’s name, your phone number and address—on the ID tag.
- **Implant a microchip.** It is an inexpensive and effective means of identification in the event your pet’s collar comes off. A microchip is a small electronic chip enclosed in a tiny glass cylinder that is placed under the skin. This chip contains your pet’s identification number, which is used to look up your contact information in the microchip registry database. If your pet is lost, the chip can be activated by a scanner, common in veterinary clinics and animal shelters.
- **Ensure your pet’s microchip is registered** (most are registered at the time of implantation) and updating the information it contains every time you move or change your phone number.

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**Fast Facts**

- **8 million** dogs and cats in the U.S. enter animal shelters each year
- **15%–30%** lost dogs that are reunited with their owners
- **2%** lost cats that are reunited with their owners