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Are Microchips Safe?

There was a media report late in 2006 stating that implanted microchips “cause cancer.” This report has circulated widely through cyberspace to many dog and cat owners via email. So, should you have your pet’s microchip removed?

The quick answer is a definite “NO.” Microchips have been implanted in 10-12 million pets. There are only 4 reports of tumors associated with these microchips. And it is also possible that even in these 4 reports, the tumor could be coincidentally near or around the microchip and not caused by the microchip. The study reported in the media article was done on mice and rats that were genetically predisposed to cancer, and still only 1% (1 out of 100) of the animals developed cancer near the microchips. The 4 chances out of 10 million for a pet to get cancer from a microchip seems to me to be an extremely safe prospect.

There is a much greater risk of losing your pet at some time during your relationship. Dogs and cats escape from yards no matter how careful we all try to be. With a microchip, he has a good chance of finding his way back to you. Most veterinary clinics will scan a “found” animal for free. If he has a microchip, the clinic will help the finder to get the proper information from the microchip company to reunite the pet with his proper owner. Most animal control facilities (pounds) scan all animals as they enter the facility. My own dog escaped from my friend’s yard and was taken to the animal shelter. They did scan him and find his microchip and called me to let me know he was there. Needless to say, I was thrilled to find him. I will continue to microchip all my pets, both large and small.