

Microchips reunite cats with owners

A client recently brought in for a health check a friendly male cat she found in unincorporated Santa Ana about six months earlier. Peggy told me the cat was a lot of fun.



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First, I scanned him for a microchip, and he had one.

This news surprised Peggy. I told her we should trace the chip and find out

whether the cat still had an owner who wanted him. She was disappointed to find out there was another owner.

My front office manager tracked down a phone number for the original owner, who said the cat had been given to his son's girlfriend, Donna, about two years ago. The cat had gotten loose about six months ago. He said he would contact her and get back to us.

Donna was extremely happy to learn that her lost Figaro had been found. She drove down from El Monte and met up with Peggy at the clinic. It was a great reunion for Donna and Figaro.

Usually, when cats get lost in Orange County, owners fear coyotes have eaten them.

Fortunately for Figaro, a caring woman found him. He was reunited with his

owner because of his microchip. How did Figaro get from El Monte to Tustin? We'll never know.

This isn't the first time we've helped return a lost cat to his owner. At my clinic we scan every found cat for a chip. Only a small percentage of cats have them embedded.

I tell owners that microchips are like extra insurance policies on their cats: A microchip is not a guarantee a cat will be recovered, but it is a way to identify your cat permanently and try to get him back.

All of the animal shelters in Orange County scan animals they find at least once, if not several times. I hope all veterinary clinics are doing the same. Many rescue groups and adoption centers place a microchip in all of the pets that go to new homes.

Having a microchip placed under the skin of your pet takes a few seconds. It is no more painful than any other injection and doesn't hurt afterward. The chip is made of inert materials and carries a unique identification number.

If your cat has no microchip, think about getting one. It could be the difference between recovering a pet that has accidentally gotten outside and never seeing that beloved cat again.

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