



MICROCHIPPING IN THE U.K. BEHAVIOURALLY AWARE

Microchipping is compulsory for all dogs. Puppies are to be microchipped by 8 weeks old, meaning the chips are implanted at an age where experiences strongly influence all dogs behavior, especially puppies, in the veterinary situation in the future. It is therefore essential that the microchipping and vet experience is a positive one.



Is microchipping worrying for a dog?

Yes it can be. The scruff is less sensitive to big needles but it can be discomforting. It can be a strange experience being handled for novice dogs or dogs that have had a painful experience in the past. Holding the dogs scruff does not automatically relax dog's as this response is lost very early in dog development. It is not worrying for all dogs but especially in early development we need to assume it could be and take precautions to make it positive.

How to make microchipping positive?

- **Experienced Practitioner** – can implant quickly and calmly.
- Allow exploration of surroundings before the procedure.

- Give an exciting treat only in this room.
- Do the procedure on the floor if the dog is not used to the table.
- Handle gently, never lift by the scruff or correct if they struggle.
- Notice when they are becoming uncomfortable, shifting weight, licking lips, see whites of eyes. THEN STOP what you are doing
- Practice handling at home with the dog with being touched when on a table or towel on the floor. You can then take the towel with you to the vet
- Give the dogs something tasty while the procedure is occurring, something to lick and continue after implantation and allow more exploration, eating or play (whatever your puppy or dog finds rewarding)
- Avoid touching the implantation site for 48 hours

My dog was very worried at the vets or during procedures?

In cases of dogs avoiding or even growling to create distance from being handled please postpone and ask your vet to consider issuing a certificate of exemption. This allows time to teach you dog the vets is a wonderful place and they can relax. Employing the services of a behaviourist can give you guidance. Alternatively, talk to your vet about sedation. As repeat attempts, fear without teaching calm and relaxing associations, with the dogs showing avoidance behaviour will increase fear and problematic behaviour in the vet practice.