April is Pet First Aid Awareness Month!

Whether an injury is small or large—say, you cut your pet’s toenail too short or they dislocate a leg during a hike—a first aid kit is crucial to making sure an injured pet gets on the path to recovery. Keep one at home and another in the car to ensure you’re always prepared to take care of your pet. Here are some common items to keep in a pet first aid kit and what you may need them for.

- Medical and vaccination records
- Bottled water for drinking or flushing wounds
- Collapsible bowls
- Kibble and/or treats to coax them to the car or a safer place
- Small flashlight
- Soft muzzle, leash, and collar
- Gloves for you to keep from introducing additional foreign material
- Tweezers for removing stingers, ticks, and other foreign materials
- Clean towels to clean a wound, act as stretcher, or wrap an anxious pet in
- Emergency blanket for cold environments or a pet that is in shock
- Rectal thermometer as well as a water-based lubricant
- Antiseptic and wet wipes for everything from wiping their paws to disinfecting a wound
- Canine-specific aspirin/ibuprofen (felines should only be given NSAIDs provided by a veterinarian)
- Benadryl for mild allergic reactions to stings, bites, or ingestions
- Cold compress for decreasing swelling and inflammation
- Gauze, tape, elastic wrap, scissors
- Cotton balls or swabs
- Burn relief gel
- Milk of Magnesia or activated charcoal (do NOT induce vomiting unless consulting a veterinarian or poison control center first)
- Saline solution for flushing wounds/eyes
- Eye dropper or syringes for flushing wounds or administering oral medications
- Antibiotic ointment to help prevent infection, relieve pain, and act as a barrier from bacteria and germs
- Styptic powder for stopping minor bleeding
- Butterfly wound closure

Keep everything in a watertight bag and accessible place. Remember that first aid does not take the place of veterinary care and you should always alert your veterinarian of unusual behavior or injuries.
It’s National Chip Your Pet Month continued

Why You Should Chip
There are many situations that can separate a pet from their owner and odds are it will happen at least once in your time together. Collars and tags can be physically removed when a pet gets lost or stolen, but a microchip is tamper-proof and makes it nearly impossible to permanently lose a pet. Although microchips can’t tell you where your pet is (it doesn’t have GPS capabilities), it does alert you when it is activated. Most people who rescue animals off the street know to bring them to a veterinary clinic or shelter. From there, the first thing a veterinarian or shelter worker will do is check for a microchip, which is why it is so important to chip your pet. Microchips also last a lifetime and only need to be updated with your current information whenever it changes, such as when you move or change your phone number. For quality assurance, have your veterinarian check it once a year to make sure it is still in place and working properly.

How It Works

ISO Standard
Globally, there has been a move toward a universal chip and identification system that has been implemented everywhere except the U.S. The ISO, or International Standards Organization, has pushed for a standard microchip that would be able to be detected using a universal scanner. Currently in the U.S., most chips can only be detected by one or the other; forward-reading scanners only detect 134.2 kHz microchips, which are ISO standard, while backward-reading scanners only detect 125 kHz or 128 kHz microchips, which are the most widely used in America. Universal scanners are forward- and backward-reading, but not widely available in the U.S. If you are planning to travel or move abroad with your pet, make sure to get them an ISO standard microchip. It is also possible for your pet to have both types of microchips without inference.