

COLLARS CAN KILL

Alert: Collars on unmonitored street animals can cause serious injury and death.

- Do **not** collar street dogs and cats unless they will be monitored at least fortnightly and handled easily and regularly.
- Do **not** collar street dogs that are released after capture using nets or other catching devices. Such dogs are less likely to be monitored and easily handled.
- Ensure that you are able to easily slide two fingers between the dog's/animal's neck and collar.
- Ensure that any collars fitted on street dogs have only breakaway buckles.

Risks of collars on street animals

Life-threatening

Collars can cut into the neck and lead to maggot wounds, and/or septicaemia and eventual death.

Collars easily become too tight when animals put on weight and/or grow. This includes **adult neutered dogs** which are at increased risk of weight gain.

Even minor collar injuries cannot be self-healed by street dogs because of the inaccessible location (neck).

Serious

Collars can trap and/or strangulate when they get caught on fences, loose wires and cables, and other objects that street dogs routinely come into contact with.

This is more likely to happen with collars that **do not** have breakaway buckles.

Moderate

Collars can become infested with mites (that cause mange) and fleas.

Street dogs maintain themselves through licking, self-grooming, and grooming each other. However, they cannot maintain collars.

Others

Collars are uncomfortable for street dogs and easily become dirty and smelly.

Most street dogs will resist the placement or replacement of collars and try to take them off because of the discomfort. They are more likely to scratch at their necks with collars on. Dogs, in particular, have a very acute sense of smell, and a dirty and smelly collar is likely to bother them more than a human.

Benefits of collars on street animals

Reflective collars can make street dogs/animals more visible to automobile drivers at night-time, and potentially reduce the risk of traffic accidents.

However, they need to be replaced frequently as dust and dirt quickly reduce or destroy their reflectivity.

Collars with identification tags or QR codes could increase the chances that a lost or relocated dog/animal is returned to his/her home location.

Collars can signal that the street dog/animal might have a human caregiver.

However, not all collared dogs have human caregivers. For example, a dog could have been collared as part of a collar drive or when captured for neutering or treatment.



For more resources on smart caregiving for street dogs:



Remaking One Health Indies



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