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## The Perfect Puppy

When looking for a new canine companion, there are several guidelines you should follow. You should consider whether you want them to help guard the house, be active and jog with you, be a companion to children, or company for your other pets. Certain breeds are better than others for having the lifestyle that you want are. Also you need to think about the temperament of yourself and the puppy you want. You also need to consider whether you want a puppy or an older dog. To decide what breed is right for you, I recommend a book called "The Perfect Puppy" by Benjamin Hart, DVM PhD. You can buy it, or come by the hospital and read our copy here. Once you choose a breed, you need to find the right dog.

- Pet stores are not good places to buy companions. The puppies are generally poorly bred and have increased risk of genetic problems and you will have no idea of the disposition of the parents. Instead, use a breeder for a pure-breed dog.
  - Check into their backgrounds (people who have purchased puppies from them, American Kennel Club), etc.
  - Look at the establishment that the dogs are in, how clean is it, how many dogs are present?
  - Make sure that all accreditation is done for the parents and that immaculate records are kept. There is certification for hips, elbows, hearts, eyes, and many others.
  - Also look at the disposition of the puppy, is it friendly, hyper, and outgoing, or shy and backing away from you? If possible, see the parents. Frequently the puppy will have a similar disposition as the parent.
- The best recommendation when choosing a puppy is to come in for a pre-purchase consultation. We can help you find that right puppy for you. Once you have bought the puppy, bring it in to examine the new member of your family and make sure that they are healthy.