

# TO YOUR *Pet's* Health

## POINTS TO PONDER WHEN PICKING A PET



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The Holidays are often a popular time for people to consider getting a new pet. I wanted to take a moment and share some of my thoughts on the topic.

Dog vs cat... Both can make great pets but are very different animals. Cats in general are independent creatures. They tend to do things on their own terms, and often do not aim to please. They are easily trained to use a litter box, because they have an instinct to bury their urine and stool. As long as a cat has access to plenty of food, water and a litter box, their independence allows for them to be left alone for hours if not days. Despite their independent streak, most cats do like attention and can make a great pet.

When considering a dog, there are so many options. The first thing to consider is your lifestyle. Do you live in a house with a huge back yard or an apartment? Are you able to come home throughout the day, or are you gone for more than 12 hours at a time? Do you have time to maintain a long hair type, or is a shorter low maintenance hair type what you want? These questions may help make the decision between a small breed or a larger breed dog. An active breed or a breed that likes to be naturally lazy. A long-haired dog or a shorter haired dog. Research your breeds before you make your final decision.

Here are a few suggestions to think

about:

If you are not able to come home often or do not have an area to allow your pet ample time to exercise and play, then a herding or a sporting breed is not a good choice. These dogs like a job and need to be able to be active and to constructively use their energy. If they are not allowed a way to constructively use this energy, they often start doing destructive things with their time, simply because they are bored.

Although long-haired breeds need to be groomed on a regular basis, some of them are hypo-allergenic and do not shed much. Most short haired breeds shed, some constantly and others at certain times of year. Although their coats are much easier to maintain, you often have the tradeoff of vacuuming or sweeping frequently.

Don't rule out mixed breed dogs, either. There are a lot of great dogs that are not purebreds. Also, think about looking in shelters or rescues for your next pet. Although puppies and kittens are fun, they can be a lot of work. There is something to be said for a little older more mature pet. Whatever type of pet you decide on, it is always a good idea to take them to your veterinarian for an initial health check. They will recommend what vaccinations your new pet will need to have done, preventatives to start them on, and recommendations on nutrition.



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