

an offset weeks of merrymaking

Exercise at least 30 minutes every day

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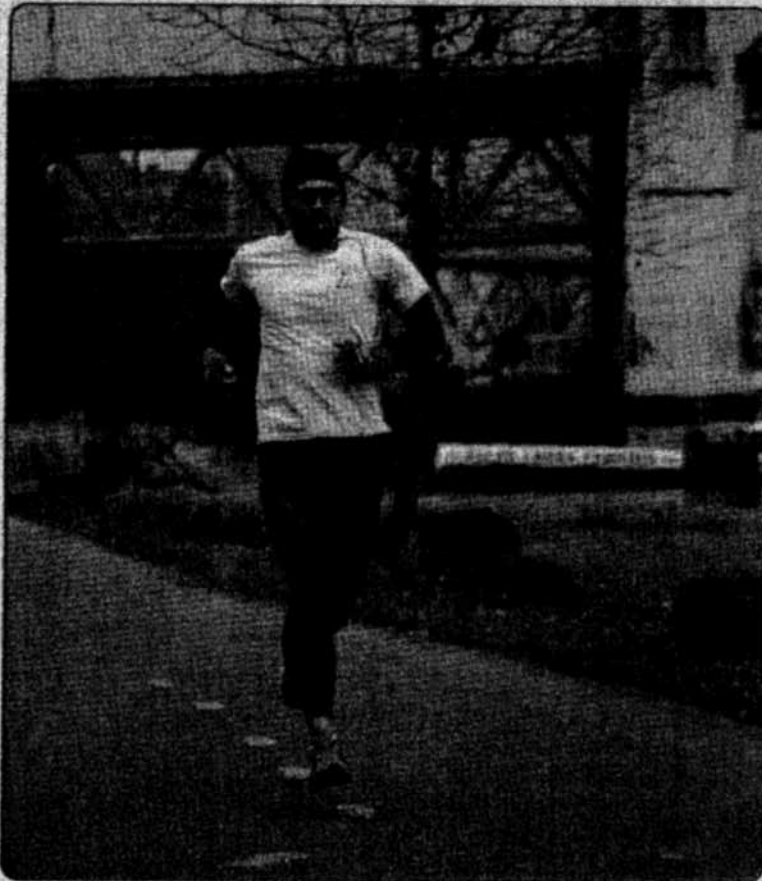
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ancouver's com-
ding ice rinks
are open most
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Head indoors
you regularly
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Weller advises



A walk or run along the seawall is always a good way to get exercise.

photo Jason Lang

taking the path of least resistance. "It might be fun to try something new, but on the other hand, maybe you don't have time to go to the gym. You may stick to your own living room or basement."

Play with the family. Winter is ideal for snowy activities like tobogganing, skiing, ice skating, snowshoeing and building snowmen. If you can't make it to the mountains and if the temperature doesn't drop below zero, this advice often falls flat in balmy Vancouver. Instead, hit the seawall on your bicycles, play a team sport or go for a walk as a family.

Most Canadian kids aren't active enough, according to health statistics based on the national average. Weller's answer is to play and make exercise fun. "Kids need to be getting 30 minutes of exercise every

day. There is something that's always fun and usually you can extend that much more past half an hour and it's quite the day."

Get outside. Fresh air, occasional

sunshine and not-so-frosty win-
weather on the West Coast. If y
can hit the slopes, be prepared fo
good sweat. "Climbing up that hill
quite a workout, especially if you
dragging a kid in the back of sle
said Weller. "Some of these thin
you're not used to doing, you
wearing heavy boots, a heavy jac
ets—you're sweating, your heart r
is coming up, you're breathing
increasing and you're using a lot
muscles that you're not used to
ing, so you can actually burn quite
few more calories than you're us
to."

Make the most of time off. Wo
with your schedule—as hectic
it may be—and steal a few mi
utes to maintain your workout
launch new ones. "If you can g
it done first thing in the mornin
or early in your day, you're pro
ably better off because you're g
ing to have less distractions lat
on with those last-minute invites
said Weller.

No time in the morning? Well
says avoid setting unrealistic expe
tations of yourself. "I can say: Get
and do it at 6:30 in the morning b
if there is no way you're going to
that, then you're just setting yours
up for failure. It's a matter of boo
ing that time for yourself. Shopping
a priority but so are your workout
Any exercise is good exercise—wh
ever time is going to work."

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Don't Scrooge your health

All Chernoff exposes the ghost of Christmas gluttony who hides in binge eating. The Vancouverite and registered dietitian points to U.S. statistics that suggest Americans regularly gain five to 10 pounds over the holiday season. Her Canadian clients, nonetheless, endure the same reality before they contact her and learn healthy ways to feed themselves.

Chernoff emphasizes the importance of planning ahead, which not only means opting for certain dishes over others and practicing portion control, but also includes eating balanced meals throughout the day. "A lot of people would starve themselves all day and then go crazy," she said. "They would have more calories in one meal than in an entire day."

They might lose the weight during the year, but more likely those added pounds added up over time. "They usually lost it but found that every year it was more difficult to take off until they decided to have a New Year's Resolution and see a dietitian. That's always how it goes."

This year, beat Jan. 1 by a week.

—MS