

THE FREE PRESS SPORTS

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Get Fit

But start slowly to avoid burning out

By SHANE MILLS

Prince George Free Press

The images haunt your dreams; they permeate your consciousness; they weigh you down like an anchor in a sea of despair. Everywhere you turn, turkey legs attack like pit bulls on speed; the mashed potatoes threaten to envelop the countryside; and the desserts keep up the attack like crazed Kamikazes.

Okay, maybe the memory of Christmas dinner and the thought of a big new year's meal aren't that scary. But each year local gyms see an influx of people trying to burn off the extra pounds that Santa brought.

And while getting fit is a laudable objective, there are some tips on the proper way to return the unwanted gift of calories.

Tanis Wey at the YMCA says the first rule is common-sense. "Try not to do everything at once. Don't try and lose 20 pounds by working out five days a week, for three hours. You'll just die out," says the fitness programmer.

She suggests following the FIT program, which features frequency, intensity and time.

To start, it might be best to workout three times a week for 20 minutes. "Take a month to get into the routine. People should work it into a lifestyle. If they go like a bat out of heck, they're never going to stay with it."

In this age of the day timer, Wey says people should make themselves appointments. "If they take that approach, they stick with it."

While Wey says it definitely gets busier in January, she says the influx of people is not as great as it used to be. "It's not as phenomenal as it used to be. More people are starting to make it a lifestyle choice."

According to Jason Germain of Ironore Fitness, motivation is a

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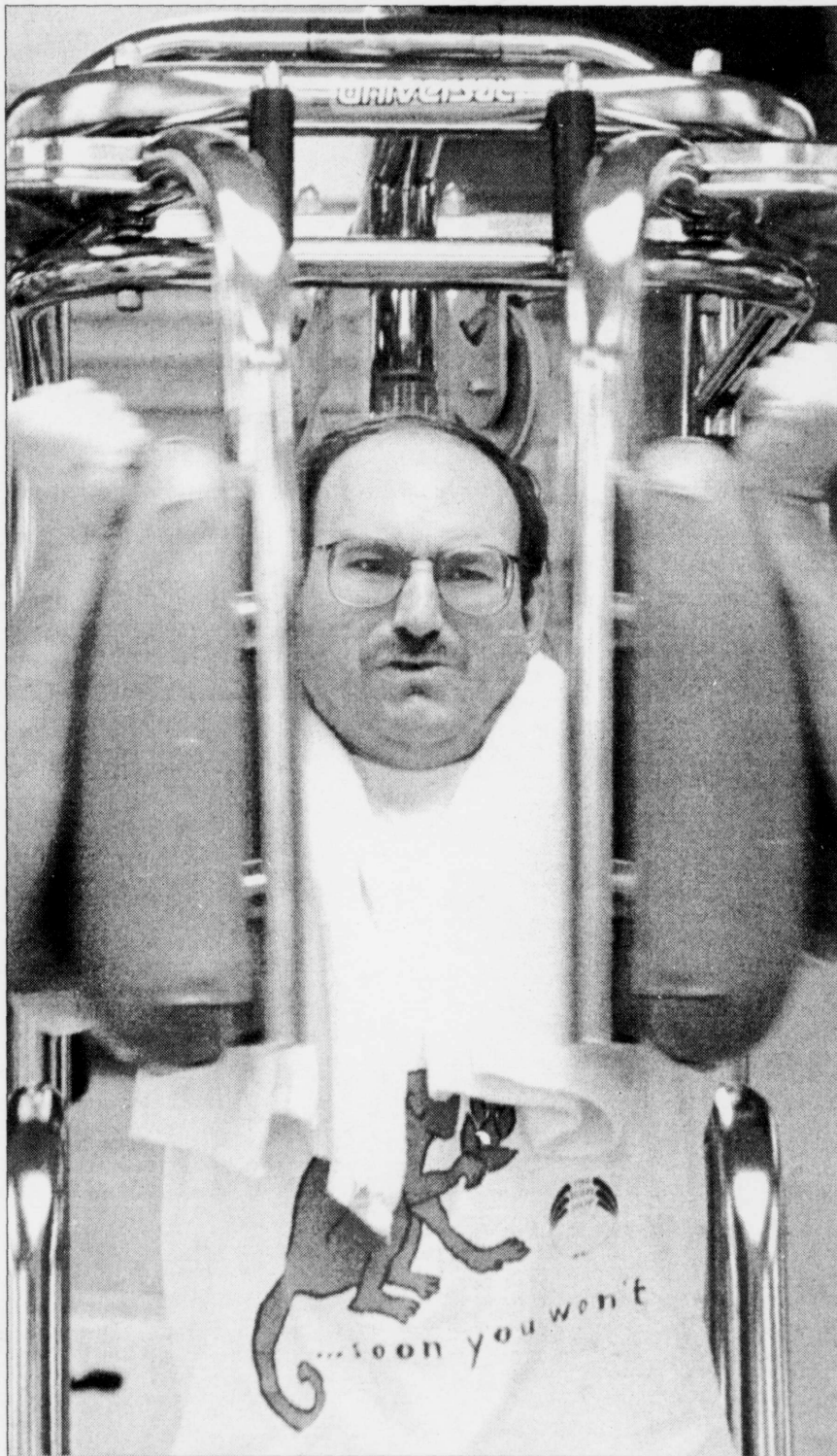
Tanis Wey

big problem in January. The fitness trainer says people who show up in January are frequently making their annual pilgrimage to the gym. "They've made the resolution and failed. I tell them to imagine if you had kept your new year's resolution last year, you'd be exactly where you want to be."

Germain says the first task is to set up the newcomers with a personal training program, which will help to set goals and the proper number of visits per week.

Most people who come in January, says Germain, are slightly overweight and he prescribes a light cardiovascular workout to begin. If someone wants to be a little gung-ho, Germain tells them to slow down. "Number one, it's not very healthy and, number two, the chances are you'll get burned out."

And he says starting slow allows people to ease into the fitness lifestyle.



Right attitude: Jack Kinnear takes the right approach, he works out regularly at the YMCA.

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