



**Bowel cancer is the second highest cause of cancer death in New Zealand\***



**3300+**

New Zealanders are diagnosed with bowel cancer every year.



**1200+**

New Zealanders die from the disease every year.



New Zealand has one of the highest rates of bowel cancer in the western world. While it is most common in the 50 years + age group, bowel cancer can affect people of all ages. The good news is, if caught early, bowel cancer can be cured.

\*Lung cancer is the highest cause of cancer death in New Zealand

We are New Zealand's leading bowel cancer charity and are 100% community funded. Our charity is committed to reducing the impact of bowel cancer in Aotearoa through:

**Awareness • Education • Advocacy  
Support • Research**

**post.** PO Box 301517 Albany, Auckland 0752  
**web.** [bowelcancernz.org.nz](http://bowelcancernz.org.nz)  
**email.** [info@bowelcancernz.org.nz](mailto:info@bowelcancernz.org.nz)

**For more information**

Contact our bowel cancer nurse on  
**freephone.** 0800 226 968  
**email.** [here4you@bowelcancernz.org.nz](mailto:here4you@bowelcancernz.org.nz)

**Donate today**

Donate and help us beat a lack of funding, beat embarrassment, beat apathy, beat ignorance, and above all, beat bowel cancer!

[donate.bowelcancernz.org.nz](http://donate.bowelcancernz.org.nz)



**Connect with us**



**Bowel Cancer**  
is curable in  
more than  
**90%**  
of cases if  
caught early

- ✓ **Know the symptoms**
- ✓ **Lower your risk**
- ✓ **Early detection is the best prevention**



Preventable • Treatable • Beatable  
[bowelcancernz.org.nz](http://bowelcancernz.org.nz)



## What is bowel cancer?

Bowel cancer, also known as colorectal cancer, can affect any part of the large bowel (colon) or rectum. If left untreated, the cancer can spread (metastasise) beyond the bowel to other organs and become much harder to treat.

## What are the symptoms?

If you have any of these symptoms below or concerns about your bowel health, it is important to see your Health Professional/ General Practitioner (GP) without delay:

	Bleeding from the bowel.
	Persistent or intermittent change in bowel habit: going to the toilet more often, increased constipation, looser stools for several weeks, feeling that your bowel is not empty after going to the toilet.
	Persistent or severe abdominal pain.
	Weight loss, tiredness, feeling weak or breathless (symptoms of anaemia).

## How can I lower my risk?

	Choose a healthy diet with plenty of vegetables and fruit; limit consumption of red and processed meats.
	Maintain a healthy body weight.
	Exercise regularly (five times a week).
	Limit or eliminate alcohol consumption.
	Don't smoke.
	Let your GP know if someone in your family has had bowel cancer.

## Early detection provides the best chance of a cure

The government-run National Bowel Screening Programme (NBSP\*) is free for eligible men and women aged 60 – 74 every two years. Screening is one of the most effective ways to find bowel cancer early before it spreads.

**Call Time to Screen on 0800 924 432 or visit [www.timetoscreen.nz](http://www.timetoscreen.nz) for more information.**

Māori and Pasifika will be invited to participate in bowel screening from 50 years old, which will roll out nationally from July 2023. The starting age is lower because a higher proportion of bowel cancer occurs in Māori and Pacific people before reaching 60, compared with others.

## What other options do I have?

If you have any concerns about your bowel cancer risk, experience any of the symptoms presented in this brochure, or someone in your immediate family has had bowel cancer, you can:

- ✓ Make an appointment with your GP or usual Health Professional today.
- ✓ Kōrero with your Māori/Pacific community health worker.
- ✓ If you feel unheard or that symptoms are ongoing without being investigated, seek a second opinion from another GP in the same practice or at a different medical centre.
- ✓ Call our bowel cancer nurse on **0800 226 968** or email [here4you@bowelcancer.org.nz](mailto:here4you@bowelcancer.org.nz) for information and support.



\* If you don't qualify for the NBSP, please see your GP about the screening options available to you.