

Media Release
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Get moving to beat the devastating impact of bowel cancer

June 2020 is bowel cancer awareness month – and it’s also our annual Move your Butt fundraiser. This campaign encourages all New Zealanders to get off their butts and challenge themselves to move more.

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic we’ve decided to go ahead with this year’s Move your Butt challenge - it’s not only the perfect challenge to do at home or while socially distancing but moving is beneficial to both our physical and mental wellbeing. However, the most critical reason is that bowel cancer doesn’t wait in a crisis.

Bowel Cancer New Zealand general manager, Rebekah Heal, says, “Every day, on average, 8 Kiwis will be diagnosed with bowel cancer, and 3 people will die from it. Bowel cancer patients are more vulnerable than ever right now, which means we need to support them more than ever.”

The campaign runs from the 1st until the 30th of June and Bowel Cancer New Zealand is asking all New Zealanders – young or old, fit or unfit – to Move their Butts more during June. The challenge does not need to be extreme, like running a marathon; it simply means challenging yourself to exercise more than you usually do.

Heal says, “This June as we emerge from our bubbles, we are aiming to get all Kiwis off the couch and moving more – even if it’s just a 10-minute walk a day. Everyone who takes part will be helping themselves prevent bowel cancer– and by getting their friends and family to sponsor them, they’ll be raising valuable funds to help us continue to support the 1 in 6 Kiwis affected by bowel cancer.”

Move your Butt month is supported by a range of ambassadors including former Black Caps fast bowler and Sky sports cricket commentator Simon Doull and his wife, Liana. Simon’s parents both died of bowel cancer, and Liana was just 36 years old when she was diagnosed with bowel cancer in 2014.

Liana and Simon Doull are taking on the Move your Butt challenge to raise awareness of bowel cancer and its symptoms. “Bowel cancer takes such a back seat here in New Zealand,” said Liana. “There’s so much information about other types of cancer, but people don’t like talking about bowel cancer. If there’s something I can do that helps another young person get their symptoms checked earlier, then I’ll be happy.”

Simon’s parents both died of bowel cancer, so he is keen people go to their GP if they have symptoms and don’t delay. “Everyone talks about the negative sides of bowel cancer, but not the positive. It’s not always a death sentence – if it’s caught early enough.”

Together, [let’s get moving](#) to beat the devastating impact of bowel cancer.

Bowel Cancer New Zealand receives no government funding and all funds raised will go towards awareness, advocacy, research and support of people living with bowel cancer.

Bowel Cancer New Zealand encourages open discussion about bowel cancer with medical professionals and avoiding 'sitting on your symptoms'. Symptoms include:

- Bleeding from the bottom or seeing blood in the toilet after a bowel motion;
- Change of bowel motions over several weeks without returning to normal;
- Persistent or periodic severe pain in the abdomen;
- A lump or mass in the abdomen;
- Tiredness and loss of weight for no particular reason;
- Anaemia.

More information on bowel cancer and Bowel Cancer New Zealand can be found at <http://www.bowelcancernz.org.nz>

For further information:

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About Bowel Cancer New Zealand

- Bowel Cancer New Zealand is a patient and family-led charity organisation.
- The registered charity was founded in 2010 by a group of people affected by bowel cancer, committed to improving bowel cancer awareness and outcomes for people with the disease.
- Bowel Cancer New Zealand aims to provide clear and up-to-date information about the disease, symptoms, what to do if diagnosed and to support patients and families affected by bowel cancer.
- The ultimate aim of Bowel Cancer New Zealand is to prevent lives being lost to this disease and to promote the national screening program rollout in New Zealand.