

Media Release

June 1st 2021

Help beat the devastating impact of bowel cancer at moveyourbutt.org.nz

Today marks the first day of 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.

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. By joining us, you’ll be raising vital funds to help fund patient support services such as counselling, which is needed now more than ever.”

The campaign runs from the 1st until the 30th of June, and Bowel Cancer New Zealand asks all Kiwis – 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, we’re aiming to get everyone off the couch and moving more – even if it’s just a 10-minute walk a day. Not only are they helping themselves prevent bowel cancer– but by getting their friends and whānau to sponsor them, they’ll be raising valuable funds to help us continue to support the 3,000 Kiwis diagnosed each year with bowel cancer.”

Move your Butt month is supported by a range of ambassadors, including TVNZ Breakfast presenter Jenny-May Clarkson who’s brother died from bowel cancer at age 54.

“If you know something isn’t right, and you’re scared of getting checked, think about those who love you – think about your kids and your partner and the love they have for you. Bowel cancer has a ripple effect on everyone close to you. So if you have any symptoms, get them checked early – for their sake,” she says.

In memory of her late brother, Jenny-May will do 54 ‘wall balls’ a day this June – a strenuous exercise that she says will be “tough, but manageable” during her busy schedule.

“Sometimes pushing yourself to move isn’t all that comfortable, but neither is bowel cancer. We’re all going through tough times right now, but those with cancer are doing it tougher.

“Many people are doing chemo on their own right now because of lockdowns, and they can’t be with family to help spread that load. Doing the Move your Butt challenge is just one thing we can all do to raise awareness of bowel cancer – and to acknowledge that it is hard for patients and their families, especially in a COVID environment,” she says.

Together, [let's get moving](https://www.moveyourbutt.org.nz) to beat the devastating impact of bowel cancer. Sign up today at [moveyourbutt.org.nz](https://www.moveyourbutt.org.nz)

Bowel Cancer New Zealand receives no government funding, and all funds raised will support patients living with bowel cancer.

END

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:

Mary Bradley, Communications & Funding manager

Bowel Cancer New Zealand

+64 21 027 51924 or mary.bradley@bowelcancernz.org.nz

About Bowel Cancer New Zealand

- Bowel Cancer New Zealand is a patient-focused charity.
- 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.