

Media Release

May 9th 2022

Kick the couch this June and help beat bowel cancer

June 2022 is bowel cancer awareness month, and Bowel Cancer NZ's annual Move Your Butt challenge. This fundraiser encourages all New Zealanders to get off their butts and move more in June, which helps fund vital research and support for bowel cancer patients.

Bowel Cancer NZ ambassador and TVNZ Breakfast presenter Jenny-May Clarkson encourages Kiwis to sign up for Move Your Butt as her brother died from bowel cancer at age 54. She says, "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.

"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," Clarkson says.

The campaign runs from the 1st until the 30th of June, and Bowel Cancer NZ asks all New Zealanders – young or old, fit or unfit – to Move their Butts more during June. The challenge does not need to be extreme - it simply means exercising a little more than you usually do.

Rebekah Heal, Bowel Cancer NZ's general manager, 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 for research and patient support services such as counselling, which is needed more than ever. We receive no government funding and rely on the generosity of New Zealanders to help us continue the important work we do."

Heal says, "This June, we aim 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 for an important cause."

Together, let's get moving to beat the devastating impact of bowel cancer at moveyourbutt.org.nz

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Bowel Cancer New Zealand (NZ) 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 NZ 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.