

**Media Release**  
**MONDAY MAY 29 2022**



### **Barker gets moving for Bowel Cancer NZ's 'Move Your Butt' fundraiser**

New Zealand sailing legend and bowel cancer survivor Dean Barker is encouraging New Zealanders to join him and help kick bowel cancer in the butt this June by signing up to Bowel Cancer NZ's annual Move Your Butt fundraising challenge.

Held over Bowel Cancer Awareness Month, the challenge encourages all New Zealanders to move more in June to raise awareness of bowel cancer and the importance of leading an active lifestyle, while also raising vital funds to support those affected by the disease.

Barker was diagnosed with bowel cancer in 2019, and underwent treatment in a courageous but private fight against the disease while in training for the America's Cup. Now a Bowel Cancer NZ Ambassador, Barker has signed up to the Move Your Butt challenge to encourage people, especially those who think they are too young to have bowel cancer, to seek help and support.

"I'll be doing press-up burpees every day during June for Move Your Butt, working towards a goal of 46 press-up burpees a day by the end of the challenge. This number is significant as it was the age I was diagnosed with Bowel Cancer," says Barker. "If by sharing my story, I can help just one person to go and get checked out early, then it will be worth it. I know that men are less likely to go to their doctor if they're worried and the old Kiwi attitudes of 'harden up' and 'just get on with it' don't help. I want to change that."

Bowel Cancer NZ general manager Rebekah Heal says every day eight New Zealanders will be diagnosed with bowel cancer, and three will die from it - making it the second leading cause of cancer-death in New Zealand.

"If caught early the disease is highly treatable and Dean's experience with bowel cancer highlights the importance of early detection and seeking help, no matter your age," says Heal. "We are thrilled to have Dean on board, and hope that his story will inspire others to take part in the challenge and get moving for a good cause and importantly to get checked if they have any concerns."

The Move Your Butt challenge 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.

To take part in the challenge, participants can register on the Move Your Butt website and set a fundraising goal. Throughout June, participants are encouraged to get moving and track their progress, sharing their journey with friends and family on social media.

“By participating, people will be raising vital funds that will be used for research and patient support services such as counseling and financial, which is needed more than ever,” says Heal. “We receive no government funding and rely on the generosity of New Zealanders to help us continue the important work we do. So we encourage all Kiwis to kick the couch this June and together let’s get moving to beat the devastating impact of bowel cancer.”

For more information, visit [moveyourbutt.org.nz](http://moveyourbutt.org.nz)

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>

Ends.

For more information, images or interview requests\* contact Kyra Holland +64 21 401 916 or [kyra@content-co.nz](mailto:kyra@content-co.nz)

**About Bowel Cancer New Zealand** • Bowel Cancer New Zealand is a registered charity 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. It aims to provide clear and up-to-date information about symptoms, what to do if diagnosed and to support patients and whānau affected by bowel cancer with the ultimate aim of preventing lives being lost to this disease and to promote the national screening program in New Zealand.

**\*Spokespeople available for interview requests:**

Rebekah Heal, Bowel Cancer NZ general manager

[Dean Barker](#), one of NZ’s greatest sailors and bowel cancer survivor

[Jenny-May Clarkson](#), TV presenter / personality whose brother lost his life to bowel cancer

[Alex Pledger](#), professional NZ basketballer and bowel cancer survivor

[Rachael Ferguson](#), bowel cancer survivor (diagnosed at 32 years)