



## Media Release – 6 November 2024

### **Movement In Movember: Urging Kiwi Men to Boost Health Through Physical Activity**

Movember is an annual campaign held each November to raise awareness and funds for men's health issues, particularly prostate cancer, testicular cancer, mental health, and suicide prevention. While there is strong support for men to grow moustaches throughout the month to spark conversations around men's health, Movember also promotes other health initiatives like the Move for Movember campaign, which encourages people to get active and raise awareness about the benefits of physical activity for mental and physical well-being.

As Movember kicks off, Exercise New Zealand is emphasising the crucial role of regular physical activity in promoting men's health, particularly in reducing the risk of prostate cancer and improving mental well-being. Recent findings from ExerciseNZ's 2024 consumer research reveal that mental health now rates as the second most important reason to exercise among men, following general health by only a few percent. Many men report that exercise not only enhances how they feel but that the social connections fostered in structured exercise programs offer additional mental health benefits. This aligns well with Movember's focus on mental well-being and social support, underscoring the value of men talking openly about their challenges and supporting one another through physical activity.

The Move for Movember campaign provides a supportive space where men can openly discuss their challenges while staying physically active. The challenge—to walk 60 km throughout November—honours the 60 men who die by suicide each hour worldwide. Walking just 90 minutes per week at a comfortable pace can help reduce fatigue, ease depression, and support a healthy body weight. Whether it's on a footpath, along the beach, or on a treadmill at the local gym, Movember encourages men to embrace the simplicity of walking for its wide-reaching benefits for mental and physical well-being.

In addition, studies have also shown that men who engage in regular exercise have a lower risk of developing prostate cancer, especially aggressive forms of the disease. Urologist, Dr. Michael Johnson explained in [John Hopkins Medicine](#) that "Most likely, it's not just the exercise that counts — it's the subsequent weight loss that also makes a difference. Studies have linked obesity with particularly aggressive forms of prostate cancer". Furthermore, a study from the [Health Professionals Follow-up Study](#) found that men who exercised vigorously for three or more hours per week had a 61% reduction in the risk of prostate-specific death compared to those who exercised for less than one hour per week. These studies highlight the importance of regular physical activity or exercise as a vital measure to help reduce the risk of certain cancer-related deaths.

*In summary, while growing moustaches is a hallmark of the campaign, Movember also champions physical activity through initiatives like Move for Movember. Exercise New Zealand supports this focus, highlighting the role of regular exercise in reducing cancer risks and improving mental health. With research showing that mental well-being is a key reason men engage in physical activity, Movember creates space for open conversations and physical activity, reinforcing the benefits of an active lifestyle for both mental and physical health. Exercise New Zealand is encouraging all men across Aotearoa to prioritise their health this Movember by incorporating regular physical activity into their routines. For more information on this release or to arrange an interview, please contact Richard Beddie at [richard@exercisenz.org.nz](mailto:richard@exercisenz.org.nz) or P: 0800 66 88 11, M: 027-520-5744.*