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Space travel changes astronauts' DNA – 8th September, 2022

## Level 0

Our DNA can change in space. This could increase astronauts' chances of getting cancer. Scientists did research on astronauts' blood. The astronauts went on the Space Shuttle 20 years ago. They gave blood before and after going into space. A professor said radiation and other factors in space could change our DNA.

Many countries are working on going to Mars and the moon. Companies are starting the business of space tourism. Scientists will do more research to study how space travel could harm our body. This could help NASA's new Artemis project. This will send people to the moon for the first time since December 1972.

## Level 1

Scientists found that our DNA can change in space. This change could increase astronauts' chances of getting cancer. The scientists did research on the blood of astronauts who flew on the Space Shuttle 20 years ago. They gave blood ten days before going into space and three days after coming back. Professor David Goukassian said astronauts work in an "extreme environment" where radiation and other factors could "result in mutations".

The study could help space travel in the future. Countries are working on going to Mars and building bases on the moon. Companies are starting the business of space tourism. More research is needed to study how any space travel might harm our body. This could help NASA's Artemis project. This aims to send people to the moon for the first time in 50 years. The last time we went to the moon was in December 1972.

## Level 2

Scientists found a new risk to space travel. They found that our DNA can change when going into space. This change could increase the risk of astronauts getting cancer. The scientists did research on the blood of 14 NASA astronauts who flew on the Space Shuttle between 1998 and 2001. They gave blood ten days before going into space and three days after returning to Earth. Professor David Goukassian said: "Astronauts work in an extreme environment where many factors can result in...mutations." He added: "Space radiation...means there is a risk that...mutations could develop."

Professor Goukassian's study could be important for the future of space travel. Several nations are working on going to Mars. Other countries want to build bases on the moon. Companies are also racing to start the business of space tourism. There are possible health risks to space travel and to exploring deep space. More research is needed to study how space travel might harm the body. This could help NASA's Artemis project, which aims to send people to the moon for the first time in 50 years. The last time humans went to the moon was in December 1972.

## Level 3

Scientists have found a new risk to space travel. They have discovered that our DNA can change when going into space. DNA mutations could increase the risk of space travellers getting cancer. The scientists did research on 14 NASA astronauts who took part in the Space Shuttle programme between 1998 and 2001. The astronauts provided blood samples ten days before they went into space and three days after returning to Earth. The blood has been frozen for the past 20 years. Professor David Goukassian said: "Astronauts work in an extreme environment where many factors can result in...mutations." He added: "Space radiation...means there is a risk that...mutations could develop."

Professor Goukassian said his study could be important for the future of space travel. In particular, several nations are working on sending astronauts to Mars. Other countries are preparing to build bases on the moon. There is also a race by commercial companies to start the business of space tourism. Goukassian said there were possible health risks to space travel and to exploring deep space. He said more research was needed to study the harmful effects of space travel on the body. This could be important for NASA's Artemis project. This aims to send people back to the moon for the first time in 50 years. The last time humans went to the moon was during the Apollo 17 mission in December 1972.