



Astronaut's Illness May Influence Future Spaceflight

Description

Five months into his fourth mission on the International Space Station (ISS), veteran NASA astronaut Mike Fincke encountered a serious health issue. While having dinner on January 14, he suddenly lost the ability to speak. This episode lasted about 20 minutes, leaving him feeling agitated but without pain.

Fincke said his crewmates quickly recognised that he needed help and responded immediately. Thanks to them and established emergency protocols, Fincke was safe. However, NASA made the unusual decision to shorten the SpaceX Crew-11 mission, returning him and three other astronauts to Earth a month earlier than planned, which left the station with only three astronauts.

NASA Administrator Jared Isaacman described the situation as a "serious medical condition." He emphasised that while astronauts are well-trained in medical matters, there are instances when their safe return is the best option, something included in flight plans.

Although this situation was unique, Fincke is not the first astronaut to face health issues in space. Effects of weightlessness can disrupt blood flow, potentially leading to speech problems. Experts believe that factors like fluid shifts in the body could explain such symptoms.

As NASA plans longer missions deeper into space, managing health risks will be increasingly complex. Future deep space missions might require doctors on board to address medical emergencies effectively and ensure the safety of astronauts during their journeys.

Vocabulary List:

1. **encountered** //ɪn'kaʊntəd// (verb): met or experienced something, often unexpectedly
2. **episode** //ˈɛpɪsɔːd// (noun): a short event or incident in a series
3. **agitated** //ˈædʒɪteɪtɪd// (adjective): feeling nervous, upset, and unable to relax
4. **protocols** //ˈprɒtə,kɔːlz// (noun): official steps or rules to follow in emergencies
5. **weightlessness** //ˈweɪtləsənəs// (noun): a condition of having no feeling of gravity
6. **disrupt** //dɪs'rʌpt// (verb): to interrupt or change something in a harmful way

Comprehension Questions



Multiple Choice

1. What health issue did Mike Fincke encounter while on the ISS?

- Option: Loss of hearing
- Option: Loss of ability to speak
- Option: Severe headache
- Option: Nausea

2. When did Mike Fincke lose the ability to speak?

- Option: January 1
- Option: January 14
- Option: January 20
- Option: February 14

3. How long did the episode of Fincke's health issue last?

- Option: 10 minutes
- Option: 15 minutes
- Option: 20 minutes
- Option: 30 minutes

4. Who described the situation as a 'serious medical condition'?

- Option: NASA Director
- Option: Jared Isaacman
- Option: Mike Fincke
- Option: SpaceX CEO

5. Why did NASA shorten the SpaceX Crew-11 mission?

- Option: Planned maintenance
- Option: Health issues
- Option: Technical failures
- Option: Funding issues

6. How many astronauts remained on the ISS after Fincke's return?

- Option: 2
- Option: 3
- Option: 4
- Option: 5



True-False

7. Mike Fincke's health episode left him feeling pain.
8. NASA decided to keep the original timeline for the Crew-11 mission.
9. Fincke is the first astronaut to experience health issues in space.
10. Jared Isaacman is the NASA Administrator.
11. Managing health risks will become easier as missions head deeper into space.
12. Future missions may require doctors on board to manage medical emergencies.

Gap-Fill

13. Mike Fincke lost the ability to speak on January 14 at approximately _____ minutes into his dinner.
14. NASA made the decision to return Fincke and the crew to Earth a month _____ than planned.
15. The episode lasted about _____ minutes, leaving him agitated but without pain.
16. Future deep space missions might require _____ on board to manage medical emergencies.
17. Effects of weightlessness can disrupt _____ flow, potentially leading to speech problems.
18. NASA has established _____ protocols to respond to medical situations effectively.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Loss of ability to speak 2. January 14 3. 20 minutes 4. Jared Isaacman 5. Health issues 6. 3



True-False: 7. False 8. False 9. False 10. True 11. False 12. True
Gap-Fill: 13. 20 14. earlier 16. doctors 17. blood 18. emergency

CATEGORY

1. Sci/Tech - LEVEL4

POST TAG

1. astronaut
2. ESL learning
3. esl news
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