



Spaceflight Experience and Medical Care

OCHMO-TB-033
Rev C

Executive Summary

Regardless of mission length or objectives, all human spaceflight requires some degree of in-mission medical support. The transition from a gravitational environment to microgravity, coupled with living in a closed-loop environment, can result in variable physiological effects and health risks. For example, anticipated physiological impacts of the microgravity environment include fluid redistribution and subsequent head congestion, particularly during the space adaptation phase. Such effects typically occur within a predictable timeframe and will affect all crewmembers to some degree. To ensure mission success and a positive spaceflight experience, known physiological effects of the spaceflight environment must be anticipated and mitigated where possible. Integration of varied strategies, including crew selection processes, pre-mission quarantine, in-mission medical capabilities, and ground medical support, are necessary to ensure crew health and optimal performance.

Simultaneously, vehicles must be designed to optimize crew health and performance and accommodate any necessary medical capabilities, equipment, crew training, and physical space. The knowledge and tasking of medical actions can be distributed among crewmembers, medical devices or aids, artificial intelligence systems, robotic systems, or similar. Additionally, incorporating ground medical support is key to many medical capabilities during flight and requires streamlined integration of variable technologies, ground communications, and support systems. Integration of these systems enables the provision of medical care and ensures crew health during a mission.



Relevant Technical Requirements

This technical brief is inclusive of NASA-STD-3001 Volume 1, Rev B as a whole. The full document can be found at the following link: https://www.nasa.gov/offices/ochmo/human_spaceflight/standards101

NASA-STD-3001 Volume 1, Rev B

[V1 3001] Selection and Recertification

[V1 3002] Pre-Mission Preventive Health Care

[V1 3003] In-Mission Preventive Health Care

[V1 3004] In-Mission Medical Care

[V1 3012] Terrestrial Launch/Landing Medical Support

[V1 3016] Post-Mission Health Care

[V1 3017] Post-Mission Reconditioning

NASA-STD-3001 Volume 2, Rev C

[V1 7043] Medical Capability



Executive Summary (continued)

This table displays the interaction between five key elements necessary to promote crew health and performance:

1. Crew Selection Standards – reference [OCHMO-TB-034 Crew Selection and Recertification](#)
2. Health Stabilization Program (HSP) – reference [OCHMO-TB-006 Health Stabilization Program](#)
3. In-mission Medical Treatment & Capabilities – discussed in this technical brief
4. Immediate Post-landing Medical Care i.e., care provided immediately upon return to Earth – discussed in this technical brief
5. Longitudinal Health Surveillance – reference [Longitudinal Health Surveillance technical brief](#)

Pre-mission		In-mission	Post-mission	
Selection Standards				
	Health Stab. Program			
		In-mission Medical Treatment & Capabilities	Immediate Post-landing Care	
Longitudinal Health Surveillance				

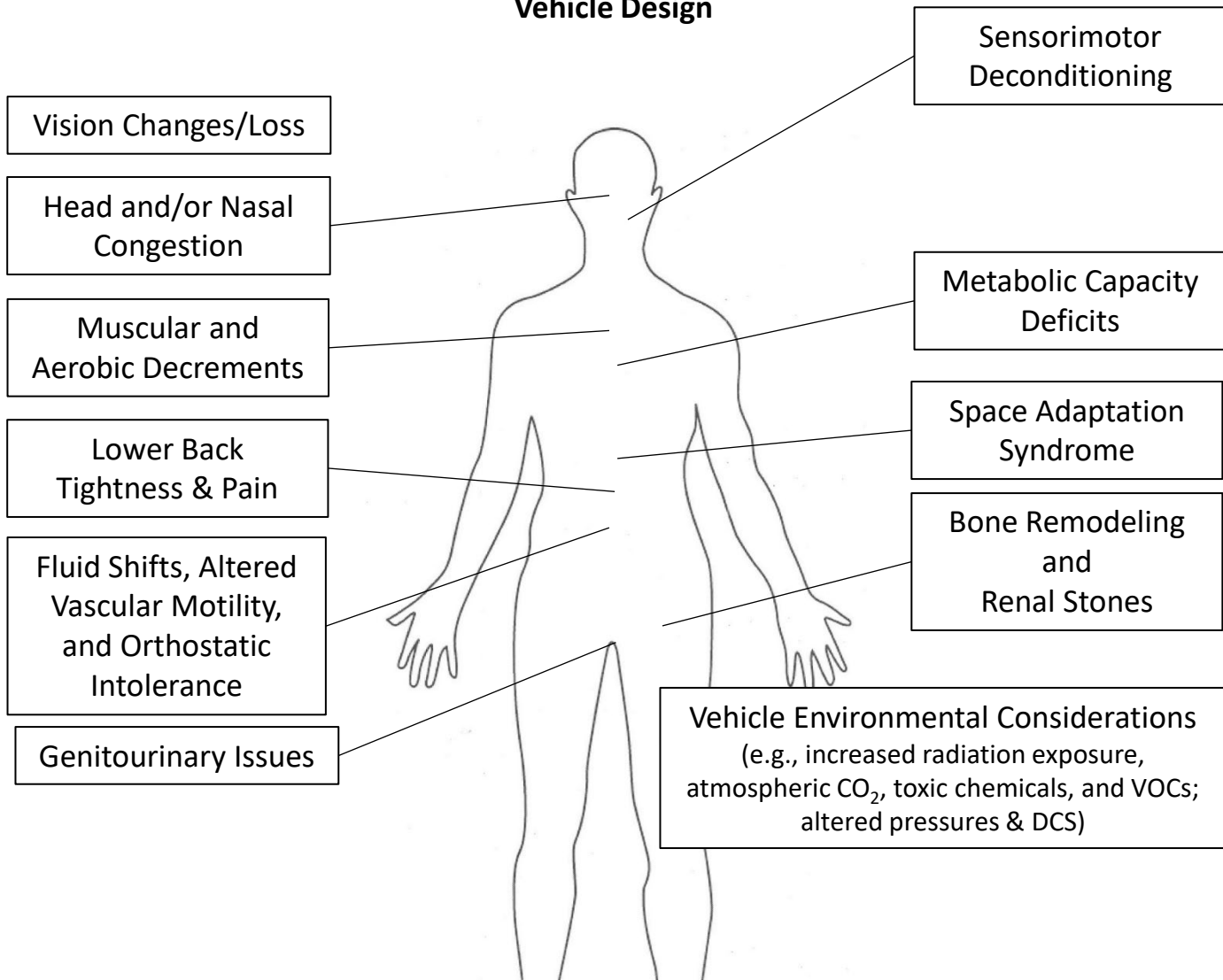


At NASA Kennedy Space Center's Shuttle Landing Facility, emergency rescue personnel gently place an "injured astronaut" onto a stretcher during a simulated emergency landing.



Background

Prevalent Physiologic Changes Experienced due to Microgravity and Vehicle Design



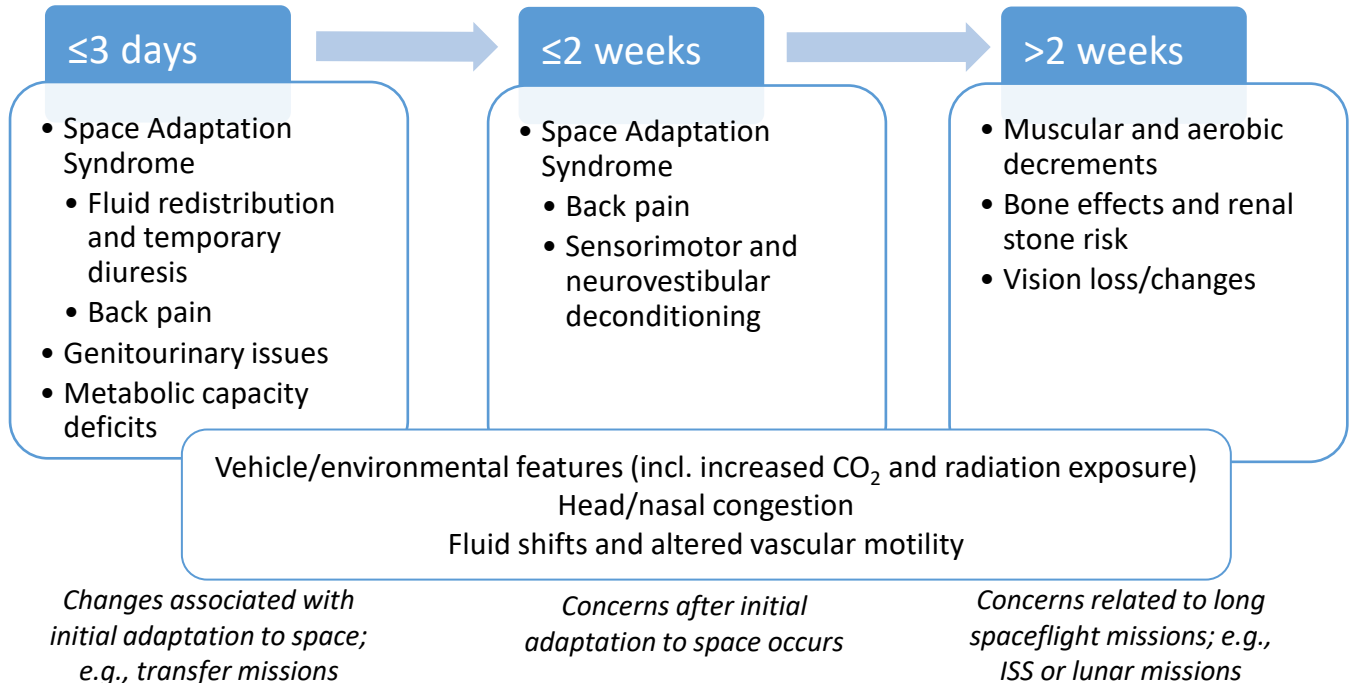
All crewmembers experience the above effects to some extent. Minimizing the potential for communicable disease transmission through screening and effective pre-flight quarantine in the Health Stabilization Program (HSP) lessens potential in-mission impacts of infectious disease.

Subsequent in-mission medical support is critical for the mitigation of the above effects and maximizing crew performance and experience. Finally, NASA crewmembers are selected through a rigorous set of procedures in order to minimize some of the above effects. For example, certain cardiac, musculoskeletal issues, and osteopenia are selected out to enhance mission success.



Background

Physiological Timeline



≤3 Days – changes associated with initial adaptation to space; e.g., transfer missions

Space Adaptation Syndrome (SAS) – neurovestibular adaptation to microgravity; symptoms include nausea, emesis, headache, malaise, vertigo; cephalad shift of fluid, resulting in facial “stuffiness”

- Affects 50-70% of crewmembers
- Treatment: pharmaceutical options, inactivity, head movement exercises, head restraints, 1g orientation and pre-mission training / prophylaxis

Head/nasal congestion – space adaptation or CO₂-related

- Affects >50% of crewmembers
- Treatment: pharmaceuticals (congestion or allergy meds)
- Leading cause of prolonged medication use in-mission

Fluid redistribution – 12-15% reduction in whole body volume, temporary diuresis with polyuria

- Affects all crewmembers
- In-mission treatment is not needed; vehicle must accommodate temporary increased urine output
- Subsequent euvoemia, but continued third spacing of fluids throughout the mission

Genitourinary issues – subset of crew who experience urinary retention with space adaptation

≤2 weeks – concerns after initial adaptation to space occurs

Lower back tightness & pain (i.e., Space Adaptation Back Pain, SABP) – back pain associated with the physiological changes in spaceflight; SABP is distinguished from other types of back pain if it develops within the first few days of the mission

- Affects 52% of crewmembers
- Positioning, exercises, and pharmaceutical options to manage (≥85% pain relief effectiveness for all treatments)



Background

Physiological Timeline

>2 weeks – concerns related to longer missions; e.g., ISS or lunar missions

Aerobic and muscular decrements – decrease in aerobic capacity and muscle mass and tone over the mission

- Begin for all crewmembers upon exposure to microgravity, but are mainly a concern for longer missions: more muscle & aerobic capacity are lost the longer the crew is in microgravity
- Countermeasures/treatment: exercise – resistive and aerobic, can be highly effective
- Upon re-exposure to gravity, decrements incurred due to spaceflight must be accounted for

Bone effects and renal stone risk – microgravity induces bone atrophy, approximated at 1.5%/month; almost fully mitigated by exercise; bone loss increases circulating calcium, which impacts renal stone risk

- Bone effects begin for all crewmembers upon exposure to microgravity, but are mainly a concern for longer missions – more bone is lost the longer the crew is in microgravity, which leads to a increased renal stone risk
- Countermeasures/treatment: pharmaceutical options and exercise

Vision alterations (Spaceflight-Associated Neuro-Ocular Syndrome (SANS)) – ocular changes including disc edema, choroidal folds, globe flattening, and/or hyperopic shifts in refractive error; believed to be associated with cephalad fluid shifts and possibly with diet or environmental factors. Vision changes could impact performance.

- 16% of crewmembers show disc edema during/after long-duration missions; most findings subclinical, some require corrective lenses
- Treatment: corrective lenses, and adjustable glasses can be flown to aid vision adjustments; potential countermeasures: pharmaceuticals, environmental/dietary considerations

Altered vascular motility – stagnant or reverse flow in the internal jugular vein has been observed in 6 of 11 crew members (55%) tested in mission on approximately flight day 50; one crewmember was found to have an occlusive internal jugular vein thrombus. This is an emerging finding and has potential impacts on flight participants with cardiovascular conditions.

Increased radiation exposure – an increased risk of developing cancer post mission

- Space Environment radiation exposure – increased exposure outside of low-Earth orbit
- Shielding is effective against some radiation exposure (solar particle events (SPE), but does not mitigate Galactic Cosmic Radiation (GCR) exposure
- Primary risk is for carcinogenesis (post-mission); additional risks for cataract development and potential cardiovascular or neurological sequelae

Upon re-entry to 1g: descent and landing

Sensorimotor and neuro-vestibular deconditioning – the brain and neurological systems that control balance and motor skills adapt to microgravity within 2 weeks of spaceflight missions; it takes hours to days for the body to readapt to gravity upon landing, with associated balance issues and visual inconsistencies

- Affects all crewmembers post-landing to some extent; may be severe enough that crew cannot perform functional/
- operational tasks (e.g., fall recovery)
- Impacts vehicle design (e.g., displays and controls)
- Prevention: in-mission exercise provides some benefit
- Treatment for symptoms similar to SAS

Relevant Technical Briefs

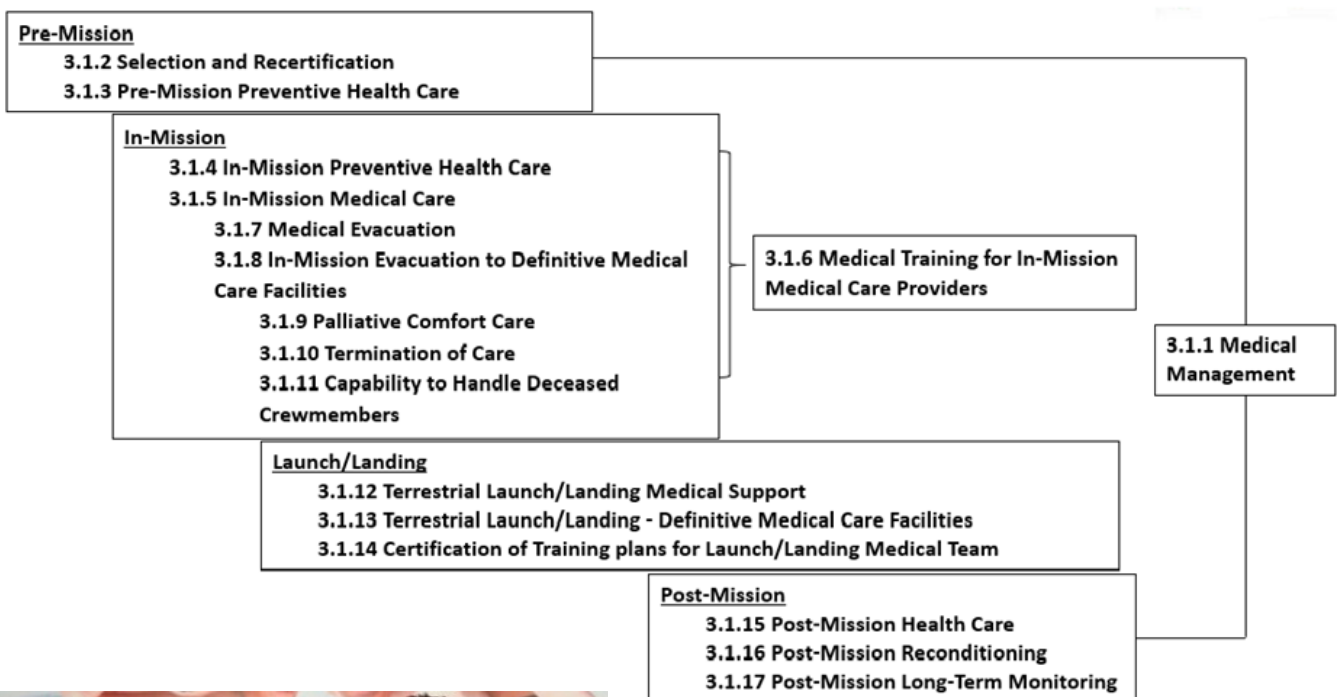
[OCHMO-TB-030 Bone Loss](#)

[OCHMO-TB-020 Ionizing Radiation](#)

[OCHMO-TB-010 Sensorimotor](#)

Health and Medical Care Standards for Astronauts

Comprehensive set of Health and Medical standards from crew selection to post-mission health care.





Application

Medical Program Design Guidance Overview

- The importance of the interaction between crew selection, health stabilization programs, longitudinal health surveillance, in-mission medical capabilities, and immediate post-mission medical care cannot be overstated. These program aspects, in conjunction with vehicle design, work together to maximize crew health and performance over the mission, while helping to minimize resource footprint and wasted time during the mission.

Medical Program Design begins with crew selection but is maintained throughout the pre-flight and mission cycle.

- By employing selection criteria and selecting out certain conditions, healthier individuals are flown and less risk is present in-mission.

If the selection criteria is broadened, in-mission medical capabilities need to accommodate the anticipated conditions and if the conditions are exacerbated by spaceflight.

- Crewmembers should participate in a health stabilization program (HSP) to promote success over the full length of the missions.

HSPs help reduce the burden of spaceflight adaptation by ensuring the crew begin missions with good health & minimize risk of communicable diseases.

- To reduce the need for in-mission medical care and mitigate the risks of spaceflight, activities should be performed pre-, in-, and post-mission to help the crewmember achieve maximal health (i.e., longitudinal astronaut health surveillance, training, countermeasures, and reconditioning should be employed).

By taking a preventive approach rather than a reactionary one, total onboard resources and required mission capabilities can be reduced and optimized.

- Based on the most common conditions expected and seen during missions, NASA tailors in-flight medical capabilities and skillsets to ensure that the most likely or impactful medical or physiological events can be managed and crew health optimized. There are additional conditions and capabilities that may be applicable after an overall mission architecture assessment is completed; these are similarly tailored to every program.

Application

Pre-Mission Healthcare

- Pre-Mission health care is all of the health care provided after crew selection
- Pre-Mission health care is focused on preventative care and reducing in-mission as well as long-term health risks
- Many studies and tests are conducted pre-mission to provide a baseline to be compared to post-flight results
- The longer the duration of the mission is, the greater the extent of the preventative interventions need to be



NASA commercial crew astronaut Victor Glover performs physical training on the Advanced Resistive Exercise Device (ARED) at the agency's Johnson Space Center in Houston.

Pre-Mission medical care includes but is not limited to the following strategies:

1. Optimization of nutrition
2. Vitamin D supplementation
3. Specialized Assessments and Exams (e.g., ECG, Ophthalmological exams, Photo documentation of skin)
4. Maintenance of Optimal Aerobic and Strength Physical Fitness
5. Maintenance of Flexibility, Agility, and Balance
6. Annual and Pre-Flight Physicals
7. Preventative Dental Care
8. Behavioral Health Resiliency Training
9. Total Radiation Dose Control/Monitoring (Bio-dosimetry Testing)
10. Pre-mission Health Stabilization Programs (e.g., communicable diseases prevention (influenza, cold), vaccinations)
11. Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) to preserve gametocytes prior to mission exposure to radiation)

Care can be tailored (i.e., how assessments are performed) according to the mission profile and agency.



Application

Medical Program Design Guidance

In-mission medical care is influenced by the following:

1. Expected conditions due to spaceflight adaptation (e.g., neurovestibular adaptation, back pain, muscle loss, etc.)
2. Pre-mission Health Stabilization Programs (e.g., communicable diseases prevention (influenza, cold), vaccinations)
3. Mission architecture (EVAs, decompression protocols, environmental conditions of vehicle, etc.)
4. Crew selection criteria (e.g., cardiovascular conditions, behavioral conditions)
5. Mission duration
6. Distance from Earth, time to definitive medical care, and required autonomy
7. Destination / gravitational environment

Some conditions present due to the microgravity environment are treated differently compared to terrestrial practices. These conditions include, but are not limited to:

- **Sleep Loss and Alertness:** circadian shifts and abnormal sleeping orientations lead to loss of sleep in crewmembers and subsequent alertness deficits
 - Treatment may be as simple as sleep aids (~71% use in crew; 10x higher than use in adult ambulatory medicine) and alertness aids (~21% use in crew)
 - Sleep aids are the leading reason for acute medication use in-mission
- **Headaches:** increased incidence during spaceflight, with contributory factors including elevated CO₂ levels, fluid shifts, pressure changes, and other non-spacecraft-associated factors
- **Joint and Muscle Pain:** increased incidence due to extravehicular activity (EVA) and exercise equipment used during the missions

Most conditions can be treated as they are on Earth, though mass, volume, consumables, and capability restrictions may limit the scope of in-mission medical treatment. Since full terrestrial care and treatment may not be possible, medical kits should be optimized to provide the best available care. Pertinent considerations include minimizing long-term health impacts and future mission success. In addition, prioritization should be given to medications that can serve multiple purposes and minimize adverse or unwanted side effects.

Extensive consideration should be given to all medications administered in-mission due to the closed-loop environment. For example, a medication that increases urinary calcium output is not only putting the crewmember at a greater risk of developing kidney stones but may also cause further stress on a vehicle's water reclamation system. Another consideration is the pharmaceutical treatment pathway. Sprays, for example, may not be as desirable as solid medications due to lack of gravity and vehicle air flow patterns.

Side effects of all medications should also be considered due to the bevy of spaceflight-induced physiological changes. For example, cardiovascular deconditioning and fluid redistribution is seen in all crewmembers. Thus, medications that produce effects such as cardiac depression or vasodilation should be avoided.



Application

In-Mission Preventive Health Care & In-Mission Medical Care

All programs shall provide training, in-mission capabilities, and resources to monitor and treat physiological and psychosocial well-being and enable delivery of in-mission preventive health care, **based on epidemiological evidence-based probabilistic risk assessment (PRA)** that takes into account the needs and limitations of each specific design reference mission (DRM), and parameters such as mission duration, expected return time to Earth, mission route and destination, expected radiation profile, concept of operations, and more.

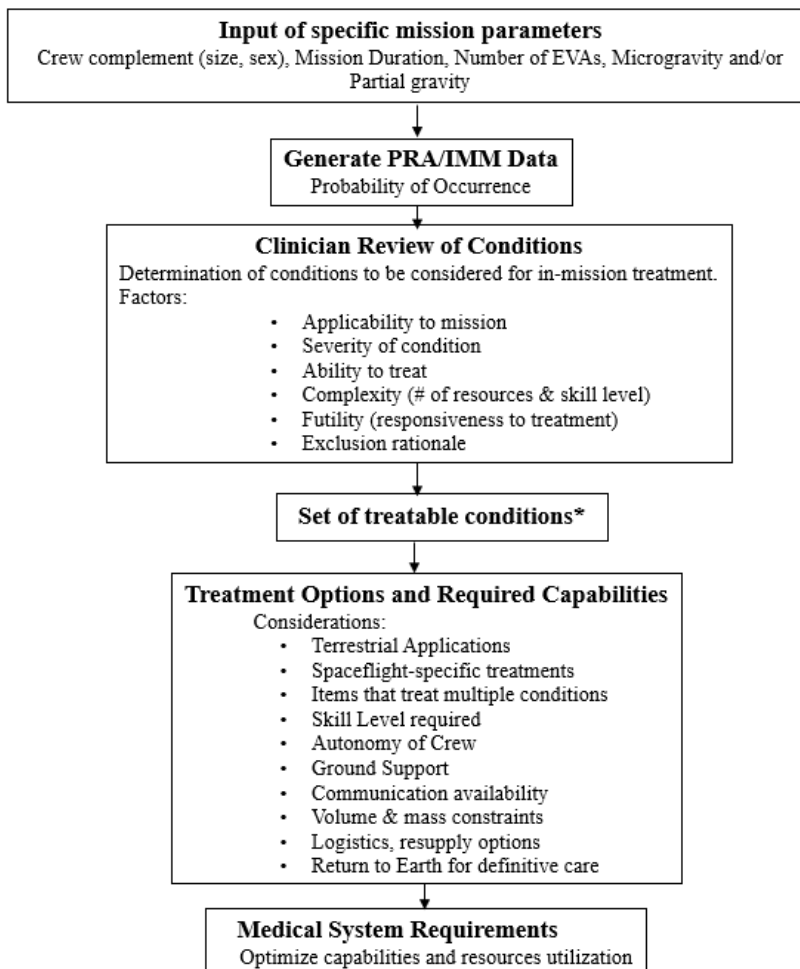


Figure 3—Outline for the Use of PRA Data to Aid in the Generation of a Medical Conditions List

*Refer to Table 11 for a medical conditions list. From NASA-STD-3001 Volume 1, Rev B

Epidemiological evidence-based probabilistic risk assessment (PRA) approach utilizing ISS experience and terrestrial data.



Application

Table 7—Sample IMM Output

	Medical Condition	Likelihood
1	Late Insomnia	13.85 per mission
2	Skin Abrasion	9.86 per mission
3	Skin Rash	9.83 per mission
4	Eye Abrasion	7.42 per mission
5	Late Headache	5.25 per mission
6	Space Motion Sickness (SAS)	4.37 per mission
7	Diarrhea	3.53 per mission
8	Nasal Congestion	3.51 per mission
9	Respiratory Infection	3.46 per mission
10	Back Injury	3.41 per mission
11	Barotrauma (Ear/Sinus Block)	3.28 per mission
12	Back Pain (SAS)	3.15 per mission
13	Insomnia (SAS)	2.70 per mission
14	Shoulder Sprain/Strain	2.43 per mission
15	CO ₂ Headache	2.15 per mission
16	Headache (SAS)	2.11 per mission
17	Spaceflight Associated Neuro-ocular Syndrome (SAS)	2.08 per mission
18	Urinary Tract Infection	1.44 per mission
19	Skin Infection	1.38 per mission
20	Elbow Sprain/Strain	1.32 per mission
21	Ankle Sprain/Strain	1.22 per mission
22	Allergic Reaction	1.18 per mission
23	Pharyngitis	1.17 per mission
24	Constipation	1.02 per mission
25	Neck Injury	0.99 per mission
26	Mouth Ulcer	0.96 per mission
27	Dental Caries	0.88 per mission
28	Knee Sprain/Strain	0.78 per mission
29	Paresthesia [Extravehicular Activity (EVA)]	0.65 per mission
30	Indigestion	0.64 per mission
31	Eye Chemical Burn	0.64 per mission
32	Sinusitis	0.64 per mission
33	Hearing Loss	0.57 per mission
34	Wrist Sprain/Strain	0.55 per mission
35	Eye Infection	0.53 per mission
36	Hip Sprain/Strain	0.45 per mission
37	Gastroenteritis	0.42 per mission
38	Fingernail Delamination [Extravehicular Activity (EVA)]	0.40 per mission
39	Otitis Externa	0.32 per mission
40	Otitis Media	0.30 per mission
41	Hemorrhoids	0.22 per mission
42	Lower Extremity Stress Fracture	0.13 per mission
43	Urinary Retention	0.11 per mission
44	Skin Laceration	0.11 per mission

The Integrated Medical Model probability risk assessment output includes a list of potential medical conditions experienced during spaceflight and is utilized by flight physicians to generate an inflight medical system.

Table 8—Medical Conditions Considered of High Likelihood or High Consequence for Space Flight Missions

Conditions noted with an asterisk (*) should be addressed on every mission regardless of the DRM parameters.

Category	Specific Condition
Environmental or space flight-induced medical conditions	Acute radiation syndrome
	Allergic reaction *
Ophthalmic conditions	Altitude sickness
	Anaphylaxis *
Ear, nose, and throat conditions	Back pain (space-adaptation related) *
	Barotrauma (ear/sinus block)
Dental/oral conditions	Burn (thermal)
	Burns secondary to fire
Cardiovascular conditions	Celestial dust exposure
	Choking/obstructed airway
Pulmonary and other chest conditions	Cold injury (chilblains/frostbite)
	Constipation (space-adaptation related) *
Gastrointestinal and other abdominal conditions	Decompression sickness
	Embolism
Genitourinary conditions	Electrical injury
	Epistaxis (nose bleed, space adaptation related)
Psychological, cognitive, or behavioral conditions	EVA-related dehydration
	Headache (CO ₂ related) *
Neurologic conditions	Headache (space-adaptation related) *
	Hearing loss (noise related)
Dermatological conditions	Heat illness
	Hypothermia
Musculoskeletal conditions	Medication adverse reaction
	Nasal congestion (space-adaptation related) *
Vaginal yeast infection *	Nutritional deficiency
	Space motion sickness (space-adaptation related) *
Acute otitis media	Smoke/combustion product inhalation
	Toxic inhalation injury
Acute sinusitis	Urinary incontinence (space-adaptation related) *
	Urinary retention (space-adaptation related) *
Acute arthritis	Loss of vision
	Penetrating eye injury
Acute compartment syndrome	Retinal detachment/injury
	SANS
Acute otitis media	Acute sinusitis
	Cerumen impaction
Acute otitis media	Epistaxis (nose bleed)
	Hearing loss
Acute otitis media	Otitis
	Otitis
Acute otitis media	Phar
	Resp
Acute otitis media	Caries
	Crow
Acute otitis media	Dent
	Filiu
Acute otitis media	Fract
	Oral
Acute otitis media	Toot
	Lower extremity stress fracture
Acute otitis media	Muscular sprain/strain
	Neck injury (sprain/strain)
Acute otitis media	Overuse injury – Upper or lower extremity
	Paresthesia
Acute otitis media	Subungual hematomas
	Suit contact injury (EVA related)
Acute otitis media	Vertebral disc injury
	Burn – Chemical, skin
Acute otitis media	Cellulitis – Bacterial skin infection *
	Herpes zoster (Shingles)
Acute otitis media	Skin abrasion *
	Skin laceration *
Acute otitis media	Skin rash *
	Toxic dermal exposure
Acute otitis media	Viral/fungal skin infection
	Benzodiazepine/Opiate overdose
Acute otitis media	Cerebrovascular accident
	Gravity transition neurovestibular disturbance *
Acute otitis media	Headache *
	Head trauma (major)
Acute otitis media	Head trauma (minor)
	Neurogenic shock
Acute otitis media	Neuropathy (Central – impingement)
	Paresthesia
Acute otitis media	Seizure
	Acute stress *
Acute otitis media	Adjustment reaction *
	Anxiety/panic *
Acute otitis media	Apathy/low motivation
	Cognitive disturbance *
Acute otitis media	Delirium
	Depression
Acute otitis media	Grief reaction
	Insomnia/sleep disturbances/circadian dysregulation *
Acute otitis media	Interpersonal conflict (i.e., team, ground, family) *
	Lack of meaningful work and/or monotony
Acute otitis media	Mood disturbance (e.g., irritability) *
	Neurocognitive disorders (adjustment, mood, anxiety, trauma-related, or stress-related)
Acute otitis media	Psychosis
	Relationship problems (family, crew, mission support personnel)
Acute otitis media	Work overload/burnout/exhaustion

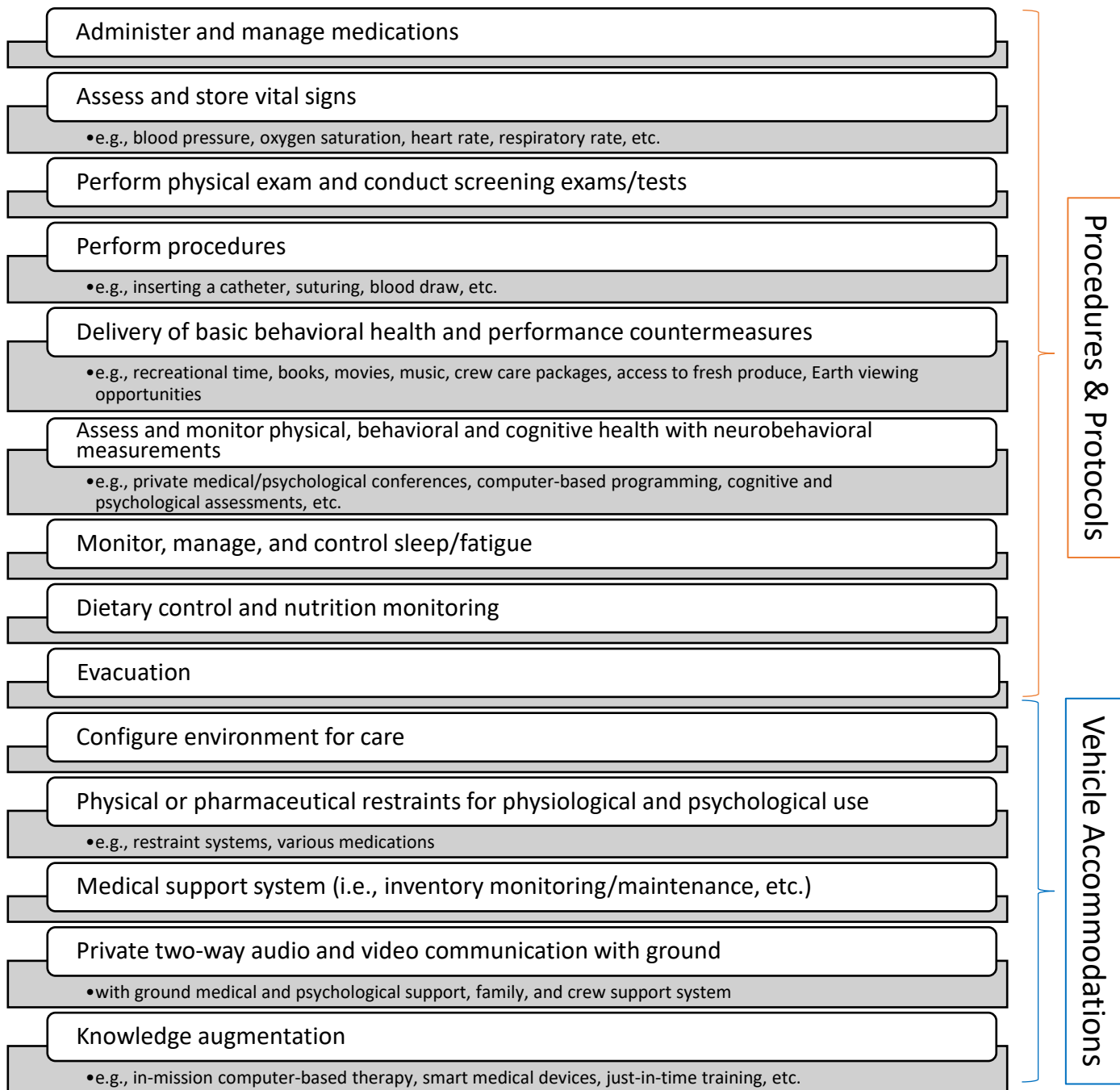
From NASA-STD-3001 Volume 1, Rev B



Application

Required In-Mission Capabilities

The following are examples of in-mission capabilities (i.e., procedures, protocols, vehicle accommodations, etc.) that might be required for a spaceflight mission.¹



¹Capabilities can be tailored (i.e., added in or taken out) according to the mission profile and spacecraft design



Application

Additional In-Mission Conditions for Program Consideration

Based on the required overall mission architecture assessment (activities, duration, vehicle design, etc.), the following conditions may need to be treated in-mission. **While some of the conditions can be treated as they are on Earth, mass, size, consumables, and capability restrictions may limit the scope of in-mission medical treatment.** Since full terrestrial care and treatment may not be possible, medical kits should be optimized to provide the best available care.

The below conditions are dependent on mission length, mission architecture, spacecraft design, launch/landing loads, the program's Health Stabilization Program (HSP), and mission activities. Thus, this subset of conditions may not apply to every spaceflight mission. Conditions from this list that are required to be treated in-mission should be tailored to each program. Such conditions may include:

- *Musculoskeletal conditions* – muscular sprain/strain; joint sprain/strain (shoulder, elbow, wrist, hip, knee, ankle); dislocation (finger, elbow, shoulder); fracture (wrist, hip/proximal femur, lumbar spine); lower extremity stress fracture
- *Ophthalmic conditions* – eye penetration (foreign body) / chemical burn / corneal ulcer / infection; SANS and potential vision changes; retinal detachment; acute glaucoma
- *Dental conditions* – caries; exposed pulp; dental abscess / filling loss / avulsion / crown loss
- *Abdominal conditions* – abdominal wall hernia; nephrolithiasis; acute pancreatitis; acute cholecystitis / biliary colic; small bowel obstruction; appendicitis; acute diverticulitis; acute prostatitis; hemorrhoids abnormal uterine bleeding
- *Psychological, Cognitive, or Behavioral Conditions* – work overload / burnout / exhaustion; lack of meaningful work and/or monotony; apathy / low motivation; grief reaction; depression; delirium; relationship problems (family, crew, mission support personnel); adjustment, mood, anxiety, trauma-related, stress-related, and neurocognitive disorders; psychosis
- *Infectious/Immune diseases* – pharyngitis; influenza; gastroenteritis; respiratory infection; herpes zoster reactivation
- *Other traumatic injuries* – back, neck, head, chest, abdominal injury; traumatic hypovolemic shock; neurogenic shock; barotrauma
- Hearing loss
- Paresthesia
- Decompression Sickness, secondary to EVA
- Fingernail delamination
- Burns, secondary to fire
- Smoke inhalation
- Choking / obstructed airway
- Altitude sickness
- Toxic exposure (e.g. ammonia, hydrazine, methane, formaldehyde, Freon, etc.)
- Sepsis
- Acute Compartment Syndrome

Rigorous crew selection should prevent major conditions from occurring. At NASA, individuals with any substantial risk of significant medical illness or decompensation from conditions are not certified for flight. If NASA-level crew selection criteria is not used, additional conditions may need to be considered for treatment in-mission, such as:

- Major cardiovascular events, e.g., myocardial infarctions and atrial fibrillation
- Major neurologic events, e.g., seizures and strokes (cerebrovascular accident (CVA))



Application

Additional In-Mission Capabilities for Program Consideration

The following list of additional in-mission capabilities (i.e., procedures, protocols, vehicle accommodations, etc.) may be required based on mission length, mission architecture, spacecraft design, launch/landing loads, the program's HSP, and mission activities. Capabilities should be tailored to each program based on applicability and mass/volume constraints. *Asterisked (*) conditions are capabilities that may be needed for medically autonomous missions (i.e., no real-time ground communications).*

Delivery of physical health countermeasures

- countermeasures intended to counteract cardiovascular, musculoskeletal, and neurovestibular deconditioning; e.g., exercise

Monitor and trend vital signs

Perform imaging

Perform cardiac waveform monitoring

Perform laboratory analyses

Monitor and alter work/rest schedule and balance

Individualized behavioral health and performance countermeasures suite*

- e.g., each crewmember has access to their own personal device with entertainment, photos, audio, personal video clips, virtual reality, store and forward communications with family and friends

Evidence-based asynchronous behavioral health treatment protocols available on electronic devices*

Medical devices for treating neurobehavioral disorders

Sensory deprivation countermeasures*

- e.g., novelty, virtual reality, greenhouse

Social isolation countermeasures*

- e.g., games, observance of important holidays/events

Monitor and assess environment

Access to private personal spaces and sleep accommodations with visual and auditory privacy

Procedures & Protocols

Vehicle
Accommodations

See the [OCHMO-TB-006 Pharmaceuticals](#) for additional information regarding the medical kit and pharmaceuticals used in-mission

Application

Post-Landing Considerations and Crewmember Treatment

Pre-landing Preparations

- Crewmembers can take measures before reentry to mitigate symptoms post-landing. These measures may include prophylactic medication use, fluid loading, and orthostatic intolerance compression garments.

Neurovestibular

- Cause / Background: neurovestibular system is still adapted to the spaceflight environment (i.e., microgravity)
- Symptoms: vertigo; unstable gait; nausea; vomiting
- Medical Recommendations & Treatment: medications (e.g., meclizine, promethazine); avoid rapid head movements; slow, progressive increase in activity; rest

Cardiovascular

- Cause / Background: fluid redistribution, third-spacing of total body water, relative intravascular depletion
- Symptoms: orthostatic intolerance; decreased blood pressure; increased heart rate; nystagmus and/or blurry vision; nausea; weakness/malaise; syncope
- Medical Recommendations & Treatment: compression garment (often donned prior to reentry); oral fluids (as tolerated); normal saline bolus; medications to treat symptoms; rest
- Due to relative intravascular depletion, IVs can be challenging to start. Thus, ground crew personnel need to be prepared appropriately.

Musculoskeletal

- Cause / Background: weightlessness causes bone and muscular atrophy; may be mitigated by in-mission countermeasures, such as exercise
- Symptoms: weakness; fatigue; poor coordination; impaired physical abilities; feeling of heaviness; slow & deliberate movements; muscle pain due to gravitational forces (esp. back aches from spinal recompression)
- Medical Recommendations & Treatment: assistance with ambulation; rest; long-term rehab and physical therapy may be needed

Vehicle-Induced Trauma and Toxic Exposures

- Spaceflight re-entries and landings may result in traumatic injuries to the crew (e.g., fractures, neck injuries, etc.) or exposures to toxic chemicals (e.g., hypergolic substances). Upon landing, ground medical personnel must be able to accommodate and care for a crewmember who incurs injury or exposure due to the vehicle operations.



Egress is often difficult for crewmembers upon landing. Assisted egress will most likely be needed for missions >2 weeks.



Back-Up



Major Changes Between Revisions

Rev B → Rev C

- Added additional pre-mission medical care information
- Added references to OCHMO technical briefs

Rev A → Rev B

- Updated information to be consistent with NASA-STD-3001 Volume 1 Rev B and Volume 2 Rev C

Original → Rev A

- Added 'fluid shifts and altered vascular motility' to spaceflight changes
- Added a crew selection page
- Changed the medical care philosophy
 - Removed '14 day' time break from the Levels of Care and created a two-step process for selecting applicable conditions
 - The two steps include: 1. conditions required for every mission; 2. conditions tailored to each program based on mission architecture assessments
 - Further sorted conditions and capabilities
 - Deleted the Levels of Care pyramid
- Updated the total medical conditions list
- Reformed the example medical kit, including removal of the short- vs. long-duration denotations
- Updated the example medical kit contents to become closely aligned with current medical kits



Referenced Technical Requirements

NASA-STD-3001 Volume 1 Revision B

[V1 3001] Selection and Recertification Crewmembers shall be medically and psychologically selected and annually recertified following the guidance in OCHMO-STD-100.1A, NASA Astronaut Medical Standards Selection and Annual Recertification.

[V1 3002] Pre-Mission Preventive Health Care Pre-mission preventive strategies shall be used to reduce in-mission and long-term health medical risks, including, but not limited to: (see NASA-STD-3001, Volume 1 Rev B for full requirement).

[V1 3003] In-Mission Preventive Health Care All programs shall provide training, in-mission capabilities, and resources to monitor physiological and psychosocial well-being and enable delivery of in-mission preventive health care, based on epidemiological evidence-based probabilistic risk assessment (PRA) that takes into account the needs and limitations of each specific design reference mission (DRM), and parameters such as mission duration, expected return time to Earth, mission route and destination, expected radiation profile, concept of operations, and more. The term “in-mission” covers all phases of the mission, from launch, through landing on a planetary body and all surface activities entailed, up to landing back on Earth. In-mission preventive care includes but is not limited to: (see NASA-STD-3001, Volume 1 Rev B for full requirement).

[V1 3004] In-Mission Medical Care All programs shall provide training, in-mission medical capabilities, and resources to diagnose and treat potential medical conditions based on epidemiological evidence based PRA, clinical practice guidelines and expertise, historical review, mission parameters, and vehicle derived limitations. These analyses should consider the needs and limitations of each specific DRM and vehicles. The term “in-mission” covers all phases of the mission, from launch, through landing on a planetary body and all surface activities entailed, up to landing back on Earth. In-mission capabilities (including hardware and software), resources (including consumables), and training to enable in-mission medical care, are to include, but are not limited to: (see NASA-STD-3001, Volume 1 Rev B for full requirement).

[V1 3012] Terrestrial Launch/Landing Medical Support All programs shall have medical capability at the site of terrestrial launch and landing to address nominal operations and launch/landing contingencies, including, but not limited to the following:

- HSP requirements for the crew, the crew’s family, and supporting personnel for purpose of disease prevention.
- Access to the full spectrum of medical capabilities, from routine medical and mental health care to advanced trauma life support (ATLS) capabilities, or equivalent.
- Incorporation of civilian and/or Department of Defense (DOD) facilities and Emergency Medical Services (EMS).

[V1 3016] Post-Mission Health Care Post-mission health care shall be provided to minimize occurrence of deconditioning-related illness or injury, including but not limited to: (see NASA-STD-3001, Volume 1 Rev B for full requirement).



Referenced Technical Requirements

[V1 3017] Post-Mission Reconditioning All programs shall provide the planning, coordination, and resources for an individualized post-mission reconditioning program, specific to each crewmember, mission type, and mission duration.

The post-mission reconditioning starts with crew egress at landing and includes a guided, phased reconditioning protocol. The goals of the reconditioning program include the following:

- a. To ensure the health and safety of returning crew.
- b. To actively assist the crew's return to full functional abilities and return-to-flight status.
- c. To actively assist in the crew's return to pre-mission fitness.

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[V2 7043] Medical Capability A medical system shall be provided to the crew to meet the medical requirements of NASA-STD-3001, Volume 1.



Reference List

1. Human System Risk Board Risk Packages – including Orthostatic Intolerance; Radiation; Back Pain; Sensorimotor Alterations; Reduced Muscle Mass, Strength; Reduced Aerobic Capacity; Renal Stone Formation; and Vision Alterations
2. Space Operations Medical Support Training Course: Space Physiology and the Deconditioned Astronaut. NASA JSC, Space Medicine Operations Division
3. Wotring, V. E. Medication use by U.S. crewmembers on the International Space Station. *FASEB J.* 29, 4417–4423 (2015).
4. Marshall-Goebel K, Laurie SS, Alferova IV, et al. Assessment of Jugular Venous Blood Flow Stasis and Thrombosis During Spaceflight [published correction appears in *JAMA Netw Open.* 2020 Jan 3;3(1):e1920195]. *JAMA Netw Open.* 2019;2(11):e1915011. Published 2019 Nov 1.