

ASTRONAUT BIOGRAPHY



National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center
Houston, Texas 77058

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Anil Menon

(M.D., Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Air Force) NASA Astronaut

Summary:

Dr. Anil Menon was selected by NASA to join the 2021 Astronaut Candidate Class. He reported for duty in January 2022. Menon was SpaceX's first flight surgeon, helping to launch its first humans to space during the Demo-2 mission and building a medical organization to support the human system during future missions. Prior, he served NASA as the crew flight surgeon for various expeditions on the International Space Station. Menon is an actively practicing emergency medicine physician with fellowship training in wilderness and aerospace medicine. As a physician he was a first responder during the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, 2015 earthquake in Nepal, and the 2011 Reno Air Show accident. In the U.S. Air Force, Lt. Col. Menon supports the 45th Space Wing as a flight surgeon and supported the 173rd Fighter Wing where he logged over 100 sorties in the F-15 and transported over 100 patients as part of the critical care air transport team. Menon will embark on his first mission to the International Space Station in June 2026, serving as a flight engineer and Expedition 75 crew member accompanied by Roscosmos cosmonauts Pyotr Dubrov and Anna Kikina.

Personal Data:

Menon was born and raised in Minneapolis, Minnesota, to Ukrainian and Indian immigrants. He is married to Anna Menon, and they have two children. Menon enjoys teaching general aviation as a certified flight instructor and has logged over 1,000 hours as a pilot. He enjoys endurance races such as Ironman and Kokoro and back-packing with his family.

Education:

Graduated Saint Paul Academy and Summit School in Saint Paul, Minnesota, in 1995. Bachelor's Degree in Neurobiology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1999. Master's Degree in Mechanical Engineering, Stanford University, Palo Alto, California, 2004. Doctor of Medicine, Stanford Medical School, 2006. Residency in Emergency Medicine, Stanford University, 2009. Fellowship in Wilderness Medicine, Stanford University, 2010. Residency in Aerospace Medicine, University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, 2012. Master's in Public Health, UTMB-Galveston, 2012. Current board certification in aerospace medicine and emergency medicine.

Experience:

At Harvard, Menon studied neurobiology and conducted research on Huntington's disease. He later spent a year in India as a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar to study and support Polio vaccination. He attended Stanford Medical School where he studied engineering and medicine and worked on coding soft tissue models at NASA Ames Research Center, Silicon Valley, California. During his residency training in emergency medicine, Menon joined the California Air National Guard and gained experience in wilderness medicine through support for remote adventure races like Racing The Planet. Following his residency, he deployed to Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom and worked for the Himalayan Rescue Association to care for climbers on Mount Everest. Menon later transferred to the 173rd Fighter Wing for military duty and pursued a residency in aerospace medicine at UTMB-Galveston, where he published his thesis on medical kits for commercial spaceflight. During his aerospace training, he deployed twice with the U.S. Air Force critical care air transport team to treat and transport wounded warriors. He later transferred to the Air Force reserves, 45th operational group, Detachment 3 of the 45th Space Wing to provide medical direction for launch and landings.

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In 2018, Menon joined SpaceX where he started its medical program and helped prepare for the company's first human flights. He served as the lead flight surgeon for five launches and helped start their research program, private astronaut programs, and worked on development of the Starship. Menon maintains his clinical work by practicing regularly in local trauma centers, most recently University of Texas Emergency Department at Texas Medical Center, Memorial Hermann. His research efforts have led to the publication of over 20 scientific articles on emergency medicine and space medicine.

NASA Experience:

Menon started as a NASA flight surgeon in 2014. He supported four long-duration crew members on the International Space Station as the deputy crew surgeon for Soyuz missions Soyuz 39 and Soyuz 43 and prime crew surgeon for Soyuz 52. As a member of the Human Health and Performance Directorate, he also served as the medical lead for the health maintenance system and direct return aircraft development. He lived and worked in Star City, Russia, for more than six months.

Menon reported for duty in January 2022 to complete two years of initial astronaut training as a NASA astronaut candidate.

Awards/Honors:

Theodore Lyster Award, SpaceX "Kick-Ass" Award, NASA JSC Group Achievement award for Expedition 45 Medical Team, U.S. Air Force Commendation Medal, 173rd Fighter Wing Category V Airmen of the Year, William K. Douglas Award in Aerospace Medicine (UTMB), Air Force Voluntary Service Medal, Stanford Emergency Medicine Resident Award for Procedural Excellence, Stanford Emergency Medicine Residency Bedside Teaching Award, National Collegiate Inventors and Innovators Alliance Grant, Stanford Medical Scholars, Hoopes Prize for outstanding and original undergraduate thesis, summa cum laude with highest honors for undergraduate thesis, John Harvard Scholar, Harvard National Scholar, Harvard College Dean's Summer Research Award, Jewett Community Service Award, Westinghouse Science Talent Search Finalist, Rensselaer Medal for Math and Science Achievement, National Science Foundation Young Scholars Grant.