



# Space Research HEALTH ★ BENEFITS

## Blending Rest And Research In Space

(NAPSA)—Getting a good night's sleep in space involves more than finding the right pillow.

In space there is no up or down and there is no gravity. As a result, astronauts are weightless and can sleep in any orientation. However, they have to attach themselves to a wall, a seat or a bed inside the crew cabin so they don't float around and bump into something.

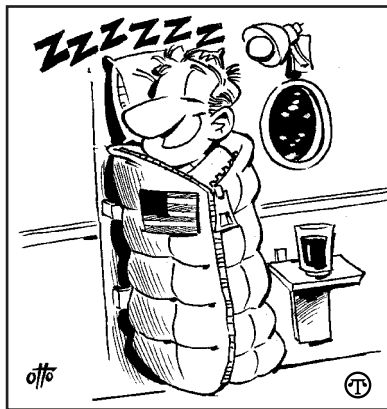
The crews engaged in ongoing research projects on the International Space Station and the space shuttle usually sleep in sleeping bags.

Crew members on the space station work around a single sleep shift. In the past, crews had more members. That meant crew members would have to sleep in shifts.

There are two small cabins on the station that can be used by crew members for sleeping. Each cabin is large enough for a single person and equipped with a sleeping bag and a window with a view of space. There is a third temporary sleep station in the U.S. Destiny Laboratory.

Currently, space station crews have three astronauts living and working in space for months at a time. Generally, astronauts are scheduled for eight hours of sleep at the end of each mission day. Like on earth, though, they may wake up in the middle of their sleep period. During their sleep period, astronauts have reported having dreams and nightmares. Some have even reported snoring in space.

On the space shuttle, astronauts can sleep in the commander's seat, the pilot's seat or in bunk beds. There are only four bunk beds in the space shuttle. As a result, on missions with five or more astronauts, the other crew members



**Some crew members on the space shuttle sleep in sleeping bags attached to a wall.**

have to sleep in a sleeping bag attached to their seats or to a wall.

The excitement of being in space—along with motion sickness—can disrupt an astronaut's sleep pattern. Sleeping in close quarters can also be disruptive, since crew members can easily hear each other.

Crew members aboard the space station also use specially designed window shades to screen out the sun when sleeping. That's because the sunlight and warmth entering through the window can often be enough to disturb a sleeping astronaut.

When it is time to get up, the crew on the space station wakes to the sound of an alarm clock. On the shuttle, however, Mission Control in Houston, Texas, sends up music to the crew. Depending on the crew, musical selections will vary from rock and roll to country or classical—even Russian music.

To learn more about the International Space Station and the shuttle program, visit the Web site at [www.spaceflight.nasa.gov](http://www.spaceflight.nasa.gov).