



**The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston**

UTMB Media Hotline: 409-772-NEWS (6397)

**Please Note:** Our studio is equipped with a [technology](#) that enables us to transmit live or taped HD or SD video over the Internet. For video interviews, contact us at 409-772-6397.

**Contact** Dizhi Marlow at 409-772-6397 or [dgmarlow@utmb.edu](mailto:dgmarlow@utmb.edu)

**For Immediate Release: October 8, 2021**

## **Call for Volunteers: A Chance to Participate in Spaceflight Research**

GALVESTON, Texas – As space tourism is becoming a reality for civilians, can people with existing medical conditions also travel to space?

The University of Texas Medical Branch, in conjunction with the National Aerospace Training and Research (NASTAR) Center in Southampton, Pa., is conducting research into the safety of spaceflight passengers who have existing medical conditions. Volunteers are invited to participate in the experiment and experience a simulated spaceflight.

With more commercial suborbital space travel opportunities in recent years, going into space is no longer just a dream for everyday citizens. Now, researchers are hoping to expand that possibility for people with medical conditions as well.

“The valuable research and knowledge from the study will help us improve future suborbital spaceflight training and simulation protocols,” says Dr. Rebecca Blue, flight surgeon at the University of Texas Medical Branch and the study investigator. “This will help us better understand how individuals with certain medical conditions may tolerate spaceflight and how to best prepare them for the experience.”

In this joint study, researchers are currently seeking volunteers with diagnosed diabetes mellitus and/or cardiac arrhythmias, as well as volunteers without history of these medical conditions. Participants will be trained on various aspects of spaceflight and then evaluated via questionnaires, physiological parameters, and basic cognitive tasks during one or more acceleration profiles that simulate spaceflight.

Study participants will train at the NASTAR Center near Philadelphia. In addition to the centrifuge-based simulator, training will also be provided on certain techniques that are commonly used to combat the physiological effects of G-forces.

During this study, participants will fly in a Federal Aviation Administration-approved High Performance Human Centrifuge. The STS-400 Centrifuge replicates the G forces encountered during various phases of a space launch, flight, and re-entry/splashdown.

With all the current spaceflight activity, participants may or may not get to space, but they'll experience the same training and centrifuge flights as those who have flown to space.

*Note: There is no compensation for time and no reimbursement for expenses, such as travel or lodging, associated with participation in this study, though the centrifuge experience itself is free to participants.*

Anyone interested in volunteering to be a research participant can visit [www.utmbamc.com/research.cfm](http://www.utmbamc.com/research.cfm) for more information.

**The University of Texas Medical Branch**

Office of Marketing and Communications

301 University Boulevard, Suite 3.518

Galveston, Texas 77555-0144

[UTMB Newsroom](#)

 @utmbnews

**ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS MEDICAL BRANCH:** Texas' first academic health center opened its doors in 1891 and today has four campuses, four health sciences schools, four institutes for advanced study, a research enterprise that includes one of only two national laboratories dedicated to the safe study of infectious threats to human health, a Level 1 Trauma Center and a health system offering a full range of primary and specialized medical services throughout the Texas Gulf Coast region. UTMB is an institution in the University of Texas System and a member of the Texas Medical Center.