

Opinion/Letter: Setback for space tourism

Sirs,

Regarding your recent article: "Tourism spacecraft explodes", there is no question that this fatal catastrophe will delay the lift-off of space tourism for perhaps as long as a decade; fear and in turn lack of private investments, will be responsible. In addition, it will trigger far more essential research regarding safer fuel, as mentioned, and better spacecraft designs.

The public – including physicians – have very little idea as to how vulnerable, for example, the entire cardiovascular system is, and in turn the vulnerability of all the major organs. I have addressed these issues for over 20 years.

The primary problems are invariable dehydration, significant reductions in magnesium ions because of insufficient intestinal absorption and loss of storage sites with, in turn, persistent elevations of adrenaline.

Notwithstanding John Glenn's apparently uneventful 9 day mission in Space at age 77, prospective sedentary overweight middle - aged tourists with deep pockets may not be as fortunate. Their health risk would be relatively minimal after a brief excursion to 63 miles with about 5 minutes of weightlessness but suppose the trip was extended to an orbital flight lasting a week or so.

I have recently published 39 year old Neil Armstrong's POSSIBLE acute temporary congestive heart failure during his last 20 lunar minutes; however insufficient space suit- water supply and air conditioning played a major role.

How many are aware of a NASA publication showing that 41 year old James Irwin, Apollo 15, experienced a brief loss of consciousness complicating a relatively minor heart rhythm disturbance just before his trip back to Earth?

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