



Canadians in Space / Les Canadiens dans l'espace  
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## Hygiene Matters in Space

### Bathing

Staying clean is as important in space as it is on Earth. Aboard the space shuttle, astronauts take sponge baths because of the limited water supply. On the International Space Station there is enough space for a full body shower. However, each astronaut will be limited to approximately 4 litres of water per shower.

When astronauts want to take a shower on the International Space Station, they step into a cylindrical shower stall and close the door. In space water does not act the same way it does on Earth. Can you guess what happens to the water? Well, the water will not drip down like on Earth (because there is no gravity to help it flow downward) so it will accumulate on the astronaut's body forming a sort of water skin. The astronaut uses a soap dispenser, which looks like a tube of toothpaste only it has soap inside instead, to get cleaned. In order to get rid of the water and soap, the astronaut uses a suction device (a vacuum) that will remove all the water and soap.

### Dental Care

Did you know that astronauts have to bring their own supply of fresh water during space flights? This is why water is such a limited resource on the International Space Station. To save water, NASA developed a special toothpaste that the astronauts can eat in order not to waste water when they are brushing their teeth.

## Do You Really Have to Go?



The waste collection system, or what we call a toilet on Earth, is basically the same in space as on Earth. First of all, because of microgravity astronauts must use feet and thigh restraints so that they don't float away! When an astronaut flushes the toilet, instead of having water dispose of the waste there is a vacuum. That's right! Air is used to dispose of the waste. Solid wastes are compressed and stored onboard to be removed later. Liquid wastes are recycled into water or simply evacuated into space. When astronauts need to urinate, they use a large tube that is connected to the bottom-front of the toilet. Anatomically correct "urine funnel adapters" are attached to the tube so both men and women can use the same toilet.