

Russia to stage mock mission to Mars

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Russia's space agency is seeking volunteers for a 520-day mock Mars mission.

The announcement of the simulation is posted on the Web site of Russia's Federal Space Agency, Space.com reported.

The "flight" will be simulated on the premises of the Russian Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medical and Biological Research in northern Moscow.

The "Marsanauts" will spend 250 days flying to Mars, with the return flight to Earth lasting 240 days. The overall "mission" would last 520 days with an option of extending it to 700 days.

Throughout the flight, the crew will be able to communicate with "mission control" via e-mail. Within the ship, video links will be used for communication.

The crew will have a five-day working week. Neither smoking nor alcohol will be allowed.

There are also several mock emergencies planned to see how effectively the crew responds.

The goal of the simulation is to study how a crew's health may be affected by such a deep space mission.



The experiment is set to begin in the fourth quarter of 2007, the IMBR said on its Web site.

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