

# Small air leak in Russian capsule patched at space station

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In this June 24, 2018 photo released by NASA, the Russian Soyuz MS-09 crew craft, left, and the Northrop Grumman (formerly Orbital ATK) Cygnus space freighter are attached to the International Space Station. NASA and Russian space officials stressed Thursday, Aug. 30, 2018, that the six astronauts are in no danger after a small air leak developed in one, at left, of the two Soyuz capsules docked at the space station. Russian officials say the leak was detected Wednesday night and may be the result of a micrometeorite impact. Both the crew and ground controllers are working hard to isolate the leak. (NASA via AP)

**Astronauts scrambled Thursday to patch a tiny hole in a Russian capsule that was allowing air to leak from the International Space Station.**

NASA and Russian space officials stressed the six [astronauts](#) were in no danger.

The leak was detected Wednesday night—possibly from a micrometeorite strike—when it caused a small drop in cabin pressure. It was traced to a hole about 2 millimeters (less than one-tenth of an inch) across in a Soyuz capsule docked at the [space station](#).

Thursday morning, the crew taped over the hole, slowing the leak. Later, the two Russian spacemen put sealant on a cloth and stuck it over the area, while their colleagues took photos for engineers on the ground. Flight controllers, meanwhile, monitored the cabin pressure while working to come up with a better long-term solution.

Mission Control outside Moscow told the astronauts to let the sealant dry overnight and that more leak checks would be conducted Friday. The makeshift repairs seem to have stabilized the situation, at least for now, officials said.

The leaking Soyuz—one of two up there—arrived at the orbiting lab in June with three astronauts. It's their ride home, too, come December, and also serves as a lifeboat in case of an emergency. A NASA spokesman said it was premature to speculate on whether the three might have to return to Earth early if the leak, even as small as it is, cannot be stopped.

The hole is located in the upper, spherical section of the Soyuz, which does not return to Earth, according to NASA.

The 250-mile-high outpost is home to three Americans, two Russians and one German. Orbital debris is a constant threat, even the tiniest specks.

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