

INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION AEROMEDICAL SUPPORT IN STAR CITY. RUSSIA

The Space Medicine Division at Johnson Space Center works with the International Space Station's international partners (IP) to accomplish assigned health care tasks. Each IP may assign a flight surgeon to support their assigned crewmembers during all phases of training, in-flight operations, and postflight activities. Because of the extensive amount of astronaut training conducted in Star City; NASA, in collaboration with its IPs, has elected to keep a flight surgeon assigned to NASA's Star City office to provide support to the U.S., Canadian, Japanese, and European astronauts during hazardous training activities and provide support for any contingency landings of Soyuz spacecraft in Kazakhstan. The physician also provides support as necessary to the Mission Control Center in Moscow for non-Russian crew-related activities. In addition, the physician in Star City provides ambulatory medical care to the non-Russian-assigned personnel in Star City and visiting dependents. Additional work involves all medical supplies, administration, and inventory. The Star City physician assists in medical evacuation and/or in obtaining support from western clinics in Moscow when required care exceeds local resources.

Overall, the Russians are responsible for operations and the medical care of the entire crew when training in Star City and during launch/landing operations. However, they allow international partner flight surgeons to care for their crewmembers as agreed to in the ISS Medical Operations Requirements Document. Medical support focuses on pressurized, monitored, and other hazardous training activities. One of the most important jobs is to act as a medical advocate for the astronauts and to reduce the threat that these hazardous activities pose.

Although the Russians have a robust medical system, evacuation may be needed to facilitate ongoing medical care. There are several international medical evacuation companies that provide this care.