

INDICATIONS

Rocket Man—Er, Fish

Putting aside efforts to cure real diseases, like cancer or AIDS, researchers from the University of Stuttgart-Hohenheim's Department of Wasting Time and Money, in Germany, launched 60 baby cichlid fish into space in an effort to decode the causes of motion sickness, Reuters reports. The fish will take off from the Esrange Space Centre in Sweden, above the Arctic Circle, and journey 160 miles up into the atmosphere, where they will become weightless for 6 minutes. Cameras will record the fish's actions. After the fish land, the researchers will examine the subjects' otolith organs, which are used to sense gravity and acceleration. "Fish, when they get motion sick, begin tumbling around, swimming in circles, and miss their balance," one of the researchers told the news outlet. Hey, that

happens to us sometimes, too, though under *slightly* different circumstances. Said one cool space traveler: "All this science, I don't understand. It's just my job, 5 days a week. I'm a Rocket Man." Um, right ...

Top Gun, Chemically Enhanced

You've heard of airplane pilots hitting the bar before takeoff. But how about the newest trend: Israeli fighter pilots popping Cialis tablets, supposedly to improve breathing at high altitudes. The Israeli military's weekly magazine, *Bamahaneh*, recently presented an interview with a retired (but not retired, if you know what we mean) military general who just so happened to have a few pills on hand and conducted a single-subject study of the drug's effects on breathing on Mount Kilimanjaro. A secondhand report in Reuters quoted an

unnamed air force officer saying the study's results justify further "testing" of the pills. But a spokeswoman for the air force said the type of oxygen starvation experienced by mountaineers is different from that seen in pilots, and there were no plans to issue the drug to members of the air force. In possibly related news, French customs officials intercepted a shipment of 224,000 fake Viagra and Cialis pills in December, at Paris's Roissy airport. Said an amorous pilot, who remained anonymous for fear of retribution: "Oui, oui! Eet is zee only way to fly. As they say: We have liftoff!"

Brain Surgery, Take One ... Action!

In the most compelling story yet to refute the benefits of medical tourism, a Singapore newspaper reports that students in one immunology class at Nanyang Polytechnic medical school spend half a semester watching television shows like "House" and

movies like "Outbreak" in lieu of normal lectures. Commented student Constance Chen, 18 years old, to the newspaper: "As youngsters, we are all into TV, and it's great fun to watch the series ['House'] rather than have regular lectures." As potential future patients, we'd like to say that no med student ought to be having "great fun" while learning how to properly perform a colonoscopy, for instance. Neither does a future doctor referring to herself as a "youngster" really make us want to hop up onto that examining table. Professor Anand Krishnasamy, who has been supplementing his course with the shows for 2 years, said, "I have a collection of movies and programs related to the subject and show them to the students whenever the main themes are connected to what I am teaching in class." He added that Tara Reid looked totally hot in "Dr. T and the Women."

—Denise Napoli

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