

Kvas Could Help Interplanetary Mission

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Living conditions are shown inside the facility created for the 520-day experiment.

Homemade kvas, a lightly fermented traditional Russian drink, could help space travelers trekking between planets stay healthy, evidence from an experiment of the Mars-500 project showed.

Experiments during project by the Institute of Biomedical Problems in Moscow revealed the slightly alcoholic drink had positive probiotic health benefits for the participants, RIA-Novosti reported.

The crew of the "mission" — who spent more than 500 days completely cut off from the outside world to simulate conditions on Mars — brewed the kvas themselves and drank 0.2 liters every day for two weeks. As a result, levels of helpful stomach-regulating bacteria increased for three participants, and they were also able to rid themselves of the harmful *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria that had been affecting all members of the experiment.

The Mars-500 project was conducted in order to simulate and study the effects prolonged periods of space travel would have on humans. An international six-man crew spent 520 days living in isolation inside a specially designed complex in Moscow during the experiment,

which ended in November.

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