

The AsMA Journal: Making a Difference in Aerospace Medicine

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Happy New Year! The start of this new year also initiates the beginning of our journal's new format, cover, and name, "Aerospace Medicine and Human Performance" – The Official Journal of the Aerospace Medical Association. Although the former name of "Aviation, Space, and Environmental Medicine" began with good intentions to show each of our areas of scientific interest, its meaning became increasingly outdated, especially the environmental medicine part of our title, which today we would call extreme environments, but was often confused with environmental health, an entirely different field. By the efforts of our Journal staff, and Dwight Holland and Jim Webb, we also realized that human performance, a critical part of our field, was missing. The title of our journal is important as it succinctly frames for prospective contributors what we do and what we want (and don't want) in our journal. Our great Association has been, and will continue to be, the premier organization in the world promoting the health, safety, and human performance of those who fly in the air and in space, and exist in other extreme environments. Our venerated journal is key to that endeavor.

Below is a story by Paul Rambaut on how our journal makes a difference in Aerospace Medicine:

For over forty-six years the Aerospace Medical Association has been a professional mainstay for me. I first delved into its archives as a graduate student at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. I was encouraged to join AsMA by Ross McFarland while I studied for my MPH at Harvard. Throughout my years at NASA, the U.S. National Institutes of Health, NATO, and into retirement I have read the iconic "Blue Journal" in its various incarnations and from time to time I have contributed to it. The journal published many works of leaders in our field and in attending most AsMA meetings, I have had the opportunity to meet such giants from around the world such as Charles

Berry, Oleg Gazenko, and Karl E. Klein.

My personal reference library in Space Medicine, gleaned from all sources, includes many important

AsMA publications and presentations. The earliest of these were based on models used to predict the effects of space-flight on the human body. Later blue journal papers followed up on the signs and symptoms of human adaptation to the space environment as well as on underlying mechanisms and putative countermeasures. I have archived some 99 AsMA papers related to "Motion Sickness," 105 to "Dizziness and Lightheadedness," 53 to "Shrinking Muscles," 42 to "Thinning Bones," 9 to "Anemia," 16 to "Immune Changes," 7 to "Breathing Changes," 26 to "Weight Loss," 12 to "Sleep Disturbances," 18 to "Visual Disturbances," 33 to "Psychological Problems" and 28 to "Light Flashes and other Effects of Ionizing Radiation."

These AsMA papers have derived from all space platforms except, thus far, the Chinese Shenzhou and Tiangong. They have included observations from Vostok, Mercury, Vokshod, Gemini, Soyuz, Apollo, Skylab, Salyut, Shuttle, Mir, and the International Space Station as well as parabolic flights, sounding rockets, biosatellites, and ground-based simulations. Contributions have come from scientists in all space faring nations.

Certainly there are many outlets for papers on Space Medicine other than AsMA, but it is well known that those published by AsMA receive the broadest dissemination and scrutiny and most effectively associate their authors with the Space Medicine community. It is by bringing together these specialists and disseminating their findings in a respected and well-read journal that AsMA regularly makes a difference in our field.



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