

Best of Last Week – Stephen Hawking's last theory, sauna bathing reducing stroke risk and health benefits of walnuts

May 7 2018, by Bob Yirka

Stephen Hawking. Credit: Andre Pattenden

It was a big week for physics as [Stephen Hawking's final theory about the Big Bang was published](#). The paper was written in collaboration with Thomas Hertog and suggests the universe is not only finite but is much

simpler than current theories suggest. Also, a team at Yale discovered [signs of a time crystal](#)—a form of matter that "ticks" when exposed to an electromagnetic pulse.

In technology news, a team at Stanford announced that they had developed [a water-based battery to store solar and wind energy](#). The prototype manganese-hydrogen battery is just three inches tall and can generate 20 milliwatt-hours of electricity. They suggest that once it is scaled up, it could serve as a grid-scale battery with a useful lifespan well in excess of a decade. Also, a team of engineers at the University of Buffalo upgraded [an ancient, sun-powered tech to purify water with near-perfect efficiency](#)—it involves draping carbon-dipped paper in an upside down "V."

In other news, a team of researchers at the University of Toronto announced that they had developed [a portable 3-D skin printer to repair deep skin wounds](#). The hand-held device deposits even layers of skin directly on wounds, helping them to heal. Also, an international team of researchers concluded that [the Earth's magnetic field is not about to reverse](#) as some have speculated. And a team at the University of Kansas studied [DNA sequences suggesting that just 250 people made up the original Native American founding population](#). And another international team of archaeologists found [new stone artifacts that showed early humans were in the Philippines 700,000 years ago](#). Also, another international team of researchers found that [frequent sauna bathing reduces the risk of stroke](#)—the 15-year study showed people who regularly visited a sauna were 61 percent less likely to experience a stroke.

And finally, if you are one of the millions around the world looking for a relatively easy way to improve your health, you might try eating some nuts, as a team at the University of Illinois found that [walnuts impact the gut microbiome and improve health](#) by reducing LDL-cholesterol levels

in adults.

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