

# **Best of Last Week—Female astronauts are more efficient, dangers of AI are overstated, lessening back pain**

May 8 2023, by Bob Yirka

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Competitive neuron concept. Credit: *Nature Nanotechnology* (2023). DOI: 10.1038/s41565-023-01391-6

It was a good week for space science, as the Space Medicine Team, European Space Agency, found that [female astronauts are more efficient](#)

[than males](#). Women have lower water requirements for hydration and also lower total energy expenditure, oxygen consumption, carbon dioxide and metabolic heat production during space missions. Also, a combined team from the University of Manchester and the University of Mauritius found evidence that [advanced aliens could soon detect life on Earth](#) by noting the types of radio waves emitted from cell towers. And an international team studying data from NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite [discovered two super-Earths orbiting a nearby star](#).

In technology news, a team of computer scientists at Islamic Azad University in Iran developed a computer model that is [capable of predicting the degree of attractiveness of a given human face](#) with a high degree of accuracy. Also, a team of engineers at China's Northwestern Polytechnical University demonstrated [a new hybrid photocatalyst for water splitting that had an internal quantum efficiency above 100%](#). And a trio of computer scientists at Stanford University suggested that warnings from scientists around the world regarding the dangers of artificial intelligence applications [may be premature](#)—they suggest that such fears may be due to the misinterpretation of data. Meanwhile, it appears that AI applications will continue to grow smarter. As just one example, a combined team from the University of Oxford, IBM Research Europe, and the University of Texas [created artificial neurons that mimic complex brain abilities for use in next-generation AI computing](#).

In other news, a team of medical scientists at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, found evidence that [cytokine storms are not always the primary cause of death in COVID-19 patients](#)—nearly half of deaths were due to secondary bacterial infections. Also, a team at the University of Chicago found [a link between photosynthesis and a "fifth state of matter."](#) And finally, a team of pain specialists at Curtin-Macquarie-Monash University developed a therapy system that resulted in [significant improvements for people living with chronic back pain](#).

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Citation: Best of Last Week—Female astronauts are more efficient, dangers of AI are overstated, lessening back pain (2023, May 8) retrieved 20 April 2024 from <https://sciencex.com/news/2023-05-weekfemale-astronauts-efficient-dangers-ai.html>

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