

# HOW DO ASTRONAUTS brush their teeth in space?

*There's no gravity, no running water and no sink. How do astronauts manage to clean their teeth in space? Believe it or not, it's actually a lot like how we brush our teeth!*

1



First, astronauts get their toothbrushes wet just like we do. But their water doesn't come from a sink – it comes from a sealed bag with a straw on one end. To wet their toothbrushes, astronauts squeeze a blob of water onto the bristles.

2

Astronauts squeeze toothpaste onto the brush just like they would on Earth. They can't just set the toothpaste on the counter when they're done. Because there's no gravity, the tube would just float right up! Instead, the toothpaste has to be stuck down with Velcro or a magnet.



3



Astronauts brush the normal way – in circular motions, making sure to get every single tooth, including the back sides and the ones way in the back. Just like us, they brush for about two minutes, two times a day.



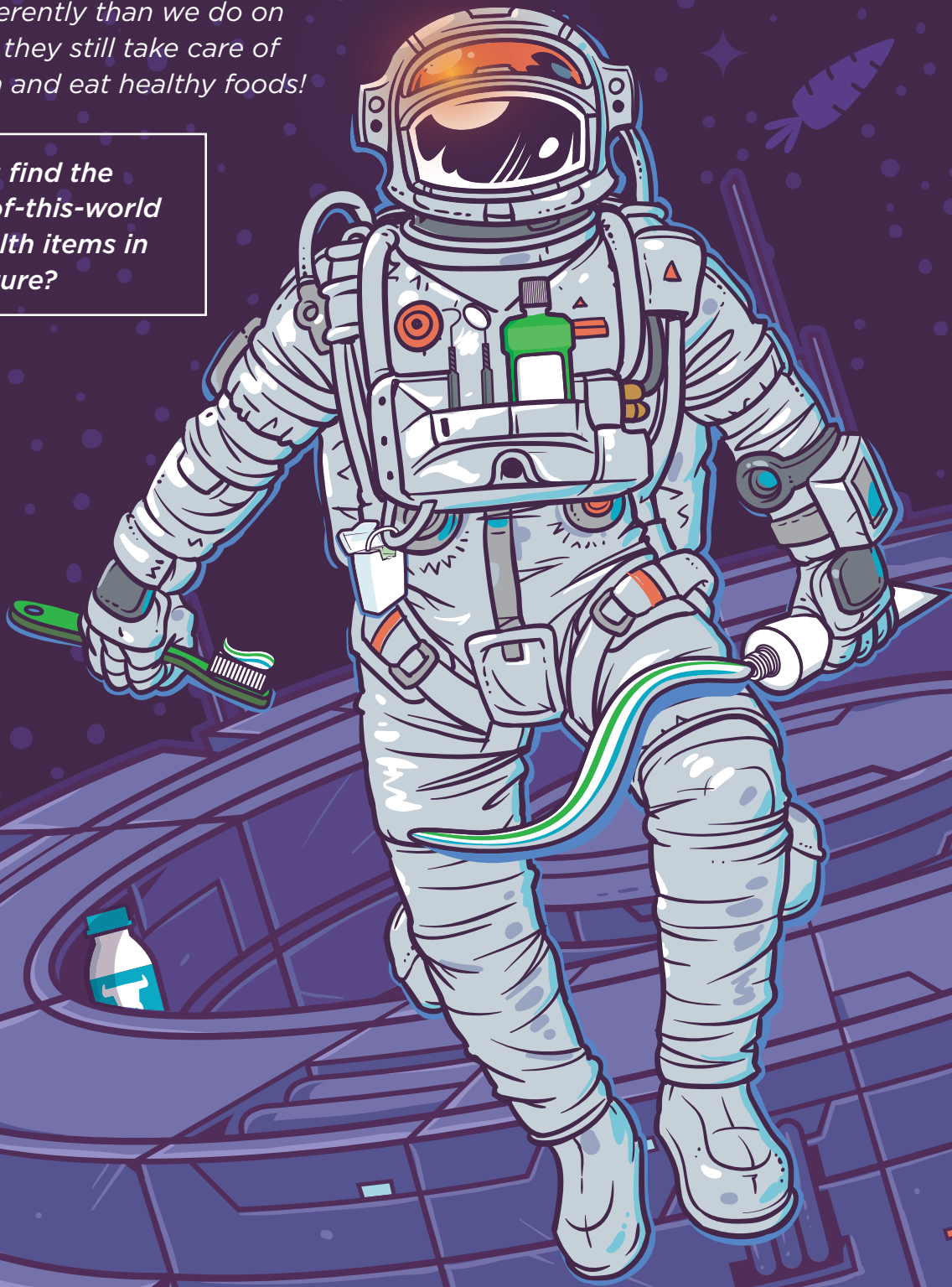
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When they're done, astronauts can't spit out the extra toothpaste – it would just float around in the air. Instead, they swallow it. We don't recommend that you swallow your toothpaste, though. Too much fluoride, a substance in most toothpastes that helps keep your teeth strong, can leave discolored marks on kids' developing teeth. If you're not an astronaut, you should probably just spit!

# OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD oral health

*Astronauts do some things in space differently than we do on Earth, but they still take care of their teeth and eat healthy foods!*

*Can you find the 10 out-of-this-world oral health items in this picture?*



Answers: Mouthguard near bottom of spaceship, milk in spaceship, apple in stars, toothbrush in astronaut's hand, floss on astronaut's belt, toothpaste in astronaut's hand, dental explorer in astronaut's uniform, dental mirror in astronaut's uniform, mouthwash in astronaut's uniform, carrot in stars