

Strange worms grow 2 heads when living for 5 weeks in the universe

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This is the result of biologists from Tufts Private Research University (USA) published in the journal *Regeneration*.

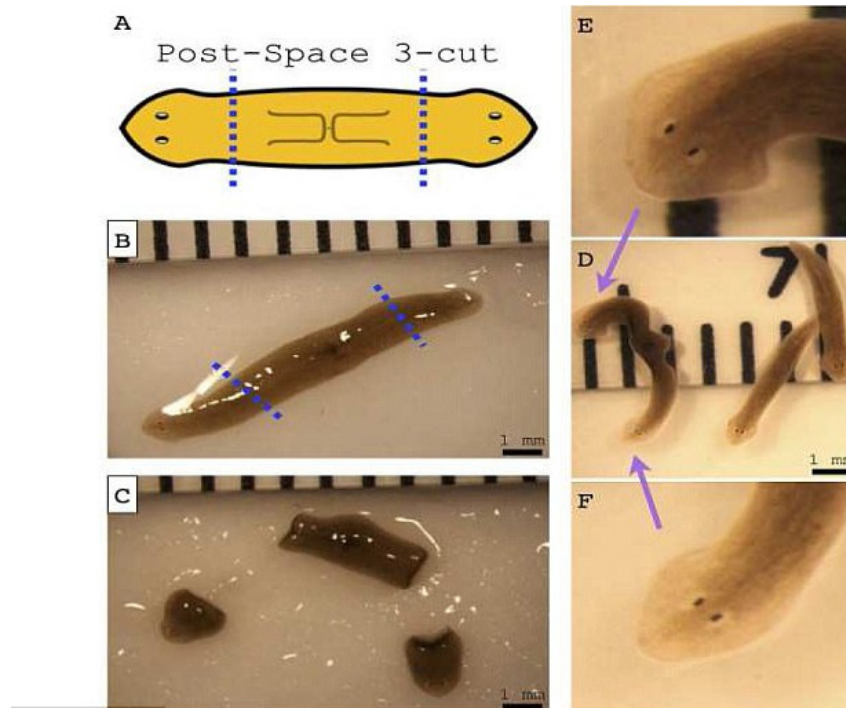


Image of two-headed worms.(Source: sputniknews.com)

Dugesia japonica worm is a flatworm genus, commonly found in freshwater environments in Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia and the Middle East. They are known for their ability to replicate themselves when a part of their body is removed.

The scientists sent *Dugesia japonica* to the space on January 10, 2015 for 5 weeks. There, they are kept in test tubes filled with water and air. These test tubes are completely placed in the dark. The samples included intact ones and some had their heads and tails removed.

After the space worm group was sent back to Earth, the scientists were amazed to see that the intact worms were brought into space to be reborn as "two-headed" worms. In particular, up to 2 heads appear at the head and tail positions are cut rather than a head and a tail.



All of the worms introduced into space undergo spontaneous division of the body, they split into two or more identical individuals - while the earth worm is not so capable. The researchers said that the cause of this could be due to sudden temperature changes when worms move from the Earth to outer space.

In the next experiment, the scientists plan to conduct a direct surgical removal of the head and tail of *Dugesia japonica* on the International Space Station (ISS) to monitor the reconstruction in space from the beginning, to the end.

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