



Health Issues and Space Weather

N. Crosby

Belgian Institute for Space Aeronomy, Brussels, Belgium < norma.crosby@oma.be >

The possibility that solar activity and variations in the Earth's magnetic field may affect human health has been debated for many decades but is still a "scientific topic" in its infancy. By learning whether and, if so, how much the Earth's space weather can influence the daily health of people will be of practical importance. Knowing whether human genetics, include regulating factors that take into account fluctuations of the Earth's magnetic field and solar disturbances, indeed exist will also benefit future interplanetary space travelers. Because the atmospheres on other planets are different from ours, as well as their interaction with the space environment, one may ask whether we are equipped with the genetics necessary to take this variability into account. The goal of this presentation is to define what is meant by space weather as a health risk and identify the long-term socio-economic effects on society that such health risks would have. Identifying the physical links between space weather sources and different effects on human health, as well as the parameters (direct and indirect) to be monitored, the potential for such a cross-disciplinary study will be invaluable, for scientists and medical doctors, as well as for engineers.