

## While aboard ISS, astronauts can see radiation as they sleep.

"It looks like a shooting star across your eyes. When you're going to sleep you'll get a flash that looks like a shooting star across your eyeball," Lt. Col. Anne McClain said.

"I had heard about that beforehand, luckily, because it would have been concerning," said Col. Andrew Morgan.



## Free floating in microgravity has some odd side effects, like where your callouses appear.

"We do get callouses and buildup in places we would not normally on Earth," Morgan said. "Like on the tops of our feet, our big toe, which we use all the time to anchor ourselves to handrails and straps and things that we find because we want to have our hands available to us while we're working, so we always use our feet to hook on to stuff, and as a consequence, the tops of our feet ...get the calluses."

## Coming back to Earth can be a bit of a shock — gravity is a cruel mistress.

"What was actually shocking was how strong of a force gravity is," McClain said. "Even though for 39 and half years of my life I lived with it, I was so shocked at how heavy my clothes felt. How heavy my watch felt. My watch felt like it was pulling my wrist down. The small stabilizing muscles kind of deteriorate—we're really good at keeping our big muscles, with lifting and exercising on the space station, but those small stabilizing muscles go away."

"Someone handed me a cellphone, and it felt as heavy as if they had handed me a desktop computer," Morgan said. I couldn't believe how heavy it was in my hand. At one point, I was sitting down and I tried to toss it into a bag—this was on the airplane flying me home, so I hadn't been on the ground for 12 hours yet—and I tried to throw it to my bag about three feet away—[it fell] immediately beneath where I had chucked it. So I hadn't even made it a quarter of the distance to where I intended to. Not just my strength, but my estimation of trajectory. Everything was all off. That's why they don't allow us to drive for a week or two after we land."

## Growing pains are common for astronauts, going up to the ISS and coming home.

"We have a lot of squishy parts in our back, and when we're not weighted down by gravity, they stretch out. And so we grow one to two inches while we're in space," McClain said. "When we come back, we kind of shrink back to our normal size in a kind of painful 24- to 48-hour period that can linger longer or shorter for different people."