

SpaceX Announces Self-Retrieving Video Capsule Endoscopy

Elon Musk's rocket company SpaceX announced Tuesday that it will be entering the medical device market with the roll out of the Falciform 9, a self-retrieving video capsule endoscopy.



"A large scale view of the Falciform 9"

The Falciform 9 is the brain child of SpaceX engineer Clive Väänänen, who conceived of the idea after he underwent a conventional capsule endoscopy.

"The adhesive patches and the data recorder worn on a belt seemed like something out of the Gemini program, so archaic and clumsy, so unnecessary," Väänänen complained. "Plus, the economics are the same: 75% of the cost of a rocket launch—or a capsule endoscopy—are in the rocket and the capsule, so why flush all that money down the drain, either into the ocean or into a toilet!" laughed Väänänen.

After swallowing the Falciform 9, video images of the entire gastrointestinal tract are stored inside the tiny rocket. As the Falciform 9 is cleared from the rectum, pH changes in the toilet water initiate launch sequencing. The patient is given a 5-minute period to clear the bathroom and open a nearby window or outside door, and then two miniscule solid fuel rockets fire and return the Falciform 9 to whatever destination—a local clinic, UPS or FedEx office etc.—was programmed into its launch sequence. With a flight radius of 11,350 miles, destination options are expansive.

“We may have over-engineered the flight capabilities on that one,” admitted Väänänen, “but 20 seconds in the mesosphere completely sterilizes the Falciform 9, so that eats up some miles right there.”

As with any technology, there were glitches along the way. “We had some problems in the early stages of development where patients did not clear the launch area, which led to issues with reentry,” Väänänen explained. “But we added a visual sensor that, if you will, cleared up that problem.”

SpaceX is already at work on the next generation of the Falciform 9, the Falciform 9xT, which Väänänen promises will be able to use its rockets to incinerate colon polyps less than 5 mm, plus provide consumers with a 45-point Wellness Score and a personalized Helth Aktion Plan TM (trademark).

“We’d also like the next generation of Falciforms to have capacity to open a door or window by itself,” noted Väänänen. “That would take the customer entirely out of the functionality equation.”

Roll out of the Falciform 9 is scheduled for August 17th, 2018, and will be provided free with the purchase of any Tesla or conventional rocket.