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## Invention targets germs on planes

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A surgeon has invented a machine to kill germs in plane cabins. (Richard Derk / Los Angeles Times / July 10, 2007)



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By Hugo Martin  
September 8, 2013 | 12:00 p.m.

If you worry about picking up a funky bacteria on your next airplane trip, fear not: the GermFalcon is on the way.

GermFalcon, an idea that was unveiled last month at the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics conference in Los Angeles, looks like an airplane snack cart with retractable arms that stretch out over the airplane seats.

Built into the arms are ultraviolet lights, which the GermFalcon shines on the plane's seats while it rolls down the aisle. The UVC light is designed to kill 99.9% of all surface germs.

Arthur Kreitenberg, an orthopedic surgeon who invented the



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GermFalcon, said he got the idea after hearing about a study that found flight attendants are at higher risk of getting ill than other workers because of the time they spend in the cabin of a plane.

"It's a technology that is already being used in hospitals," said Kreitenberg, who already has a patent on a device that sterilizes sports balls called the GermNinja.

A prototype of the GermFalcon has been built by summer interns working at an electronics manufacturer in Santa Ana but no airline has yet committed to the device, he said.

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**lat0001** at 5:49 PM September 08, 2013

This would take time to perform. Airlines would not be interested in using it during normal turn arounds. Perhaps once a day during the overnights.

**CheshireKat** at 2:45 PM September 08, 2013

We need this in our CF clinic.

**joshstrike** at 1:08 PM September 08, 2013

You know what would be really great? If the cheapskate airlines would replace the cabin air filters and bleed off as much air as often as they used to when smoking was allowed on planes. Now that they don't have visible smoke hanging in the cabin, they stopped scrubbing the air -- I've heard from one airline mechanic that it's something like 1/5th as clean as it used to be. Saves them fuel and money. But the germs just get recirculated. This is why you always get sick on airplanes now. Didn't used to be that way.

It would also be nice to not getting sprayed in the face with a can of pesticide on international flights, or sit in a seat for 10 hours that was previously doused with it. And don't think FAs aren't getting cancer from tht stuff.

*Comments are filtered for language and registration is required. The Times makes no*



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