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Slideshows

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Victoria's Secret (2005)

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Miss Universe Riyo Mori, Miss USA 2006 Tara Conner, and Miss USA Rachel Smith at Bridgehampton Polo

Paris Hilton's clothing line dream comes true

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Victoria Beckham gets a \$5 million credit limit at BeverlyHills Neiman Marcus

The secret behind Heidi Klum's toned body

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Tourist boom brings threat to Leh's Tibetan architecture

Peru tourist haven desolate after earthquake

India targets 10 million tourists in 2010: report

Tourism booming in 'world's biggest open-air museum' -- Rome

Buddhism draws foreign tourists to Dharamsala

Tourists could love Machu Picchu to death: Peru experts

'Arrogant' Paris on tourist charm offensive

New Seven Wonders of the World

Beach bliss in Kiev, with a whiff of sewage

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INTERSTELLAR DUST CLOUDS MAY HAVE SOWN SEEDS OF LIFE ON EARTH

Posted on Thursday, August 23, 2007 (EST)
Oxygen, carbon and water are some of the widely known elements necessary for supporting life on Earth. Adenine, an essential organic molecule, without which the basic building blocks of life would not come together, is equally important.

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Washington, Aug 23 (ANI): Oxygen, carbon and water are some of the widely known elements necessary for supporting life on Earth. Adenine, an essential organic molecule, without which the basic building blocks of life would not come together, is equally important.

But till now, scientists have not been able to find the origin of Earth's adenine and where else it might exist in the solar system.

Now, a University of Missouri-Columbia researcher has used a theoretical model to hypothesize the existence of adenine in interstellar dust clouds.

"The idea that certain molecules came from space is not outrageous. You can find large molecules in meteorites, including adenine. We know that adenine can be made elsewhere in the solar system, so why should one consider it impossible to make the building blocks somewhere in interstellar dust?" said Rainer Glaser, professor of chemistry in MU's College of Arts and Science.

According to Prof. Glaser, these same interstellar clouds may have showered young Earth with adenine as it began cooling billions of years ago.

They could also potentially hold the key for initiating a similar process on another planet, he said.

Prof. Glaser said astronomers should look for interstellar dust clouds that have highly-concentrated hydrogen cyanide (HCN), which can indicate the presence of adenine.

Finding such pockets would narrow the spectrum of where life could exist within the Milky Way galaxy, he said.

"There is a lot of sky with a few areas that have dust clouds. In those dust clouds, a few of them have HCN. A few of those have enough HCN to support the synthesis of the molecules of life. Now, we have to look for the HCN concentrations, and that's where you would want to look for adenine," said Prof. Glaser.

"Chemistry in space and 'normal chemistry' can be very different because the concentrations and energy-exchange processes are different. These features make the study of chemistry in space very exciting and academically challenging; one really must think without prejudice," he said.

The theory describing the fusion of early life-forming chemicals is presented in the latest issue of the peer-reviewed journal



Britney Spears set to flee to Britain with her two children?



Diana was 9 weeks pregnant at the time death, claims journalist



Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie to host charity dinner for Katrina victims



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"Astrobiology".

The paper, "Adenine Synthesis in Interstellar Space: Mechanisms of Prebiotic Pyrimidine-Ring Formation of Monocyclic HCN-Pentamers," is co-authored by Brian Hodgen (Creighton University), Dean Farrelly (University of Manchester) and Elliot McKee (St. Louis University). (ANI)

Talk back: Email your opinion on the subject for publication here to talkback@sawf.org

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Editor's Pick

World's oldest person sprightly until end

Australian magazine offers new breasts as top prize

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Sex toys hit the high street in France

Readers' Talkback

Anonymous on Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie to host charity dinner for Katrina victims

Nozie, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe on 'Our wedding will be a big party', says Janet Jackson's beau Dupri

Gossip

Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes leaving their Beverly Hills mansion

Timberlake falls back on manager for club entry

Rihanna says mentor Jay-Z is teaching her how to cope with fame

Tom Cruise sleeps "soundly" in a different room from Katie Holmes

Britney Spears set to flee to Britain with her two children?

Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie to host charity dinner for Katrina victims

Swedish duo Lucky Twice avoided Britney Spears to guard their clean image

Foxy Brown handed jail term for probation violation

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Paris Hilton buys Mediterranean-style mansion in Beverly Hills

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Shopping really does lie in a woman's genes!

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Sydney mayor pushes for 'civilised' drinking laws

Malaysian pastor vows to go ahead with gay church

Childbirths slip back in Japan

Hotel rooms scarce in Malaysia amid tourism boom

Tech

Google to unveil phone of its own by next year

Mobile emails ring death knell for SMS

Gigabit wireless technology could soon make wired comps, DVDs a thing of the past

Sony introduces latest ultra-portable VAIO TZ notebook

Soon, a wristwatch that will recognize hand gestures to control your music, cell phone

Pentax announces Optio E40 compact digital camera