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August 27, 2008

High-tech outfit offers military benefits

A Miami doctor has invented something right out of a science fiction movie -- a "liquid-metal" suit that can protect its wearer from radiation and chemicals.

One of the suits was recently donated to Tampa Fire Rescue. But the bigger market for the full-body suit is the military.

Dr. Ronald DeMeo, a pain-management specialist who founded Radiation Shields Technology, noticed how he was getting kind of burned after giving X-rays to patients. The protective gear usually worn by X-ray technicians just wasn't doing enough to protect him. So he started experimenting with different fibers to see if he could find something better.

The result is a suit that is relatively light weight and keeps the person wearing it feeling cool, allowing them to complete a full range of tasks. The price is steep: \$1,900 for each of the most-advanced suits DeMeo has built.

Some folks in the military, the doctor says, are already using the suit, though that market could grow dramatically. And NASA is looking at the suit to see what it might offer astronauts on any future mission to Mars.

Posted by William R. Levesque at 12:16:48 PM on August 27, 2008 in [On the homefront](#) | [Permalink](#)

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The O.P., military jargon for Observation Post, is your one-stop source for all things military in the Tampa Bay area: the latest news from the VA, what's happening at MacDill Air Force Base what's up with local troops deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. Share your thoughts in the comments section and send your story ideas to the author.



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THE AUTHOR

William R. Levesque is the St. Petersburg Times military and VA reporter. In a 20-year journalism career, he has covered Florida's agriculture, the courts, business, police and Pasco county government. He was the Times' lead reporter in the Terri Schiavo case and also covered the criminal trial of the Rev. Henry Lyons. He can be reached at levesque@sptimes.com or (813) 226-3436.



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