

Lunavity device to allow wearer to defy gravity

March 15 2018, by Bob Yirka



A team of researchers at the University of Tokyo has developed a gravity-defying backpack that enables its wearer to jump much higher and farther than normally—similar, perhaps, to a giant leap on the surface of the moon. The group has named the device Lunavity and has posted a video on YouTube extolling its virtues.

The Lunavity is essentially a harness for connecting a human to a drone and allowing them to become airborne, if only temporarily. Once strapped in, a user would see arcs of [rotors](#) above their head. The rotors would presumably be activated just prior to a user's desire to leap up into the air. The initial force would be instigated by leg muscles—the rotors would then keep the user rising for several seconds until reaching a peak, at which point the user would slowly fall back to Earth. The researchers report that the Lunavity should allow a person to jump two or three times higher than normal. They also note that the point of the device is to extend or augment human abilities. Doing so, they add, could make crosswalks or stairs obsolete. It might also offer more freedom to people with disabilities.

The team has created a website to support the device, though they have not made their intentions clear. They advertise the fun aspects of the Lunavity and its intuitive control system, and even suggest it could be used to help pedestrians avoid tripping and falling down. While other engineering teams often create websites to market their product, the team at Lunavity has not done so, which makes visitors to the site wonder if it is a serious endeavor.

Notably absent in the video is a working prototype of the [device](#). Instead, the researchers use animations to demonstrate its usefulness. That absence suggests that the team has not yet built a prototype safe enough for use by people. Further evidence of the team's inability to build a working model was the non-functioning prototype displayed at this year's ongoing SXSW festival.

More information: lunavity.com/

Citation: Lunavity device to allow wearer to defy gravity (2018, March 15) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2018-03-lunavity-device-wearer-defy-gravity.html>

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