Happy 4th of July! Given how many people in the US are travelling this long weekend, this article about air quality on airplanes caught my eye. And, while you are reading this post, may I suggest the following song: B.o.B – Airplanes ft. Hayley Williams of Paramore?

In this short article called Air Quality on Airplanes 4th of July Air Travel Update, Charlie Seyffer from Camfil, a manufacturer of air filters talks about the recycling and treatment of air on airplanes.

The recirculated air is passed through industrial grade HEPA air filters that are capable of removing particles that are hundreds of times smaller than the eye can see. Airliner manufacturer’s say that between 94 and 99.9 percent of airborne microbes are captured, and that there is a total changeover of all of the cabin air every two or three minutes.

Maybe it’s the remaining 6 percent of microbes that are still being blown into my face, but I often catch a cold within hours of air travel. Or is it just the fact that in an airplane with 300 passengers there is always a person near your seat who has a cold and will sneeze on you. Charlie Seyffer offers the following advice:

To reduce your probability of breathing in these contaminants turn the air vent above your seat on and aim the clean air current slightly in front of your face so that germs from infectious passengers that are nearby will be redirected away from you.

So there you have it. The article also links to a Camfill video about this topic. Happy travels and don’t catch a cold.