

In Treating Hypothermia, Slow and Gentle Are Best

We talked last week about ways to avoid hypothermia and other cold-weather

can be mild, moderate or severe. Mild hypothermia is something that most

body starts to shake, not very much but uncontrollably.

The treatment for mild hypothermia starts with getting out of the cold, and

and eating something sugary can stop the shivering. Taking a warm bath or

are all common sense treatments.

But the treatment changes when people enter the moderate or severe stages of

They lose the ability to think clearly. Their muscles become stiff. They might bump into things or fall over objects.

Adrienne Freeman is a park ranger at Yosemite National Park in California.

first try to prevent additional heat loss by placing extra covering around a

people out of the cold and to medical help as soon as possible. But she says it is equally important to move the victim slowly and gently.

Ranger Freeman says any rough or sudden movement can force cold blood

sudden flow of cold blood can create shock, a serious condition. It can also cause a dangerously abnormal heartbeat. Adrienne Freeman says the process

says something else to keep in mind is that a hypothermia victim may seem dead but still be alive.

An extremely low body temperature can cause the heart to beat so slowly that

rescue teams have a saying that victims are not dead until they are warm and dead. And that's the VOA Special English Health Report, written by Caty Weaver.