

Suspended animation coming to life: researcher

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"I think we are on the path of understanding metabolic flexibility in a significant way," said Roth, whose work at an eponymous lab in Washington State has gotten funding from a research arm of the US

Department of Defense.

"In the future an emergency medical technician might give hydrogen sulfide to someone suffering serious injuries and they might become a little more immortal giving them time to get the care they need."

Suspended animation takes place in the natural kingdom, with bears hibernating through winters while plant seeds and bacterial spores are able to biologically sleep for millions of years, according to the researcher.

It has also long been fodder for [science fiction](#).

"Usually when I mention suspended animation people will flash me the Vulcan peace sign," Roth said while explaining his research at a [TED Conference](#) the ended here Saturday.

Roth found that [hydrogen sulfide](#) in bonds in spots in bodies that would usually be occupied by oxygen, ostensibly becoming a sort of dimmer switch for [metabolism](#).

"We did it with a mouse; this was cosmic," Roth said. "We found a way to do this with a mammal. All you had to do was put it in room temperature and it was no worse for the wear."

Roth's lab has completed early phase human trials but hasn't actually tried the process in a person.

"We should know in a few years if it works or not," Roth said. "You want to plant a flag and people will come and then think about how to use it in other ways."

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