

Stages of Hypothermia (OLD VERSION)

Hypothermia occurs when the body cannot produce enough heat to make up for the heat being lost to the environment. Mild hypothermia is classified as a core temperature between 93 and 97°F (34-36°C). In this stage, the patient will shiver in an attempt to warm themselves. Moderate hypothermia is classified as a core temperature between 86 and 93°F (30-34°C). In this stage, the patient will demonstrate obvious motor impairment and slowed cognition. Finally, severe hypothermia is classified as a core temperature less than 86°F (< 30°C). Patients with a core temperature this low may experience cardiac arrhythmias and will no longer demonstrate the shiver reflex.



PLAY PICMONIC

Mild

34 - 36 Degrees C (93 - 97 Degrees F)

[Cold \(34\) Fork to \(36\) Sax](#)

Patients with mild hypothermia will have a core temperature between 93 and 97°F (34-36°C).

Shivering

[Shivering](#)

In this stage of hypothermia, patients will shiver in an attempt to warm themselves. Patients may also be lethargic or confused.

Moderate

30 - 34 Degrees C (86 - 93 Degrees F)

[Cold \(30\) to \(34\) Fork](#)

Patients who are moderately hypothermic will have a core temperature between 86 and 93°F (30-34°C).

Obvious Motor Impairment

[Motor Impaired](#)

Patients at this stage will have an obvious motor impairment, related to increased muscle rigidity.

Slowed Thinking

[Gummed-mental-gears](#)

Hypothermia can cause manifestations similar to those related to cerebral complications. Patients in a state of moderate hypothermia may present with altered mental status, particularly slowed cognition.

Severe

< 30 Degrees C (86 Degrees F)

[Less-than Cold \(30\)](#)

Patients who are severely hypothermic will have a core temperature less than 86°F (< 30°C).

Shivering Stops

[Shivering Stop-sign](#)

At this stage, reflexes will be absent, and the patient will no longer shiver.

Paradoxical Undressing

[Undressing for Parrot-ox](#)

Paradoxical undressing is a phenomenon in which severely hypothermic patients remove all of their clothing shortly before death. It is suggested that hypothermia-induced paralysis of the nerves in blood vessel walls leads to vasodilation, causing a feeling of extreme warmth.

Arrhythmias

[Broken Arrhythmia-drum](#)

The muscle of the heart becomes very irritable when it is cold. This can lead to cardiac arrhythmias such as bradycardia and atrial or ventricular fibrillation.