U of M Bear Study Could Help Critical Care Patients

Researchers at the University of Minnesota hope that what they are learning about bears could help them fight atrophy of the muscles in humans.

Scientists discovered a hormone that allows bears to hibernate all winter without losing strength, despite virtual inactivity.

Researchers say they are trying to develop a drug that would also preserve muscles for humans who are immobilized for long periods of time. It could be used for patients bed-ridden in the Intensive Care Unit, those recovering from heart failure or others who are at risk of losing muscle mass and strength.

Scientists say the drug is still years away from human trials, but are excited by the prospects.