

Scientists finally determine iceman Otzi's last meal

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Otzi the Iceman, a well-preserved natural mummy of a Chalcolithic (Copper Age) man from about 3300 BC, who was found in 1991 in the Schnalstal glacier in the Ötztal Alps, near Hauslabjoch on the border between Austria and Italy. © South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology

(PhysOrg.com) -- In a presentation at the Seventh World Congress on Mummy Studies, researchers from the Institute for Mummies and the Iceman revealed that they had finally located the iceman known as Otzi's stomach and determined his last meal. They were also able to successfully sequence his entire genome.

Researchers from the Institute for Mummies and the [Iceman](#) in Italy divided the presentation into three different topics. The first part of the presentation was given by microbiologist Frank Maixner. He had

recently examined old tomography scans taken of Otzi back in 2005 and was able to finally locate the stomach which was farther up in the torso and in an unusual position. They found the stomach to be full and, upon examination and sequencing of the DNA, they determined that Otzi had eaten Alpine ibex just 30 to 120 minutes before his death.

The next presentation was led by anatomist Frank Ruhli and dentist Roger Seiler from the Centre for Evolutionary Medicine through the University of Zurich. They presented the dental health of Otzi who was presumed to have died between the age of 35 and 40. Using three-dimensional images of his teeth, they showed how Otzi had suffered some form of blunt force trauma to two teeth only a few days before his death. They also showed how he suffered from periodontal disease and many cavities. These signs of cavities confirm the fact that the Iceman had consumed a diet full of carbohydrates.

The final part of the presentation was led by geneticist Angela Graefen from the Institute for Mummies and the Iceman. She reported that her team had finally succeeded in sequencing Otzi's full genome. This genome has already shed some light on some previous beliefs. While most artists performing facial reconstructions of Otzi have shown him with blue eyes, the new sequenced [genome](#) show that he probably had brown eyes.

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