

Scan of mummified remains indicates female was a teen at time of death

May 2 2011, By William Murphy, Newsday

The mummy is indeed a lady - one who didn't make it to adulthood.

Thursday, doctors at North Shore University Hospital in Manhasset, N.Y., performed a CT scan on the mummified remains of Lady Gautseshenu, which reside at the Brooklyn [Museum](#), and said the findings indicate her age at death was likely at least 16 years. Lady Gautseshenu is believed to have lived some 2,600 years ago in southern Egypt.

The [mummy](#) is "certainly a young adult," said Dr. Jesse Chusid as he studied the initial computerized images.

And "yes, it's female," he said, assuring the museum that this mummy's gender was as expected - in contrast to a 2009 scan of a mummy known as Lady Hor, one that showed that she was no lady.

The [CT scan](#) was the sixth the hospital has done on mummies for the Brooklyn Museum - an endeavor that allowed the hospital to show off its CT technology and the museum to highlight its mummy exhibit even as the collaboration provided insight for the professionals involved.

Dr. Amgad Makaryus, head of the hospital's [cardiac CT](#) unit, said his study of earlier mummy scans showed that four out of five showed evidence that their arteries had calcified, an indication of [heart disease](#).

"We can take these images and divine information about the mummies

in terms of their habits, their lifestyles, what they might have eaten, how they might have lived, what their age was, what their gender might be. All these things can be assessed," Makaryus said.

Lady Gautseshenu, sealed inside the coffin known as cartonnage, was placed on a gurney and rolled down the hall to the CT unit. After the scan, Edward Bleiberg, curator of Egyptian art at the museum, sat shoulder to shoulder with Chusid of the hospital's radiology unit to examine the initial scans - and ponder what they saw.

"Solid looking, intermediate density, kind of linear. ... It's like a rod," Chusid said of the image on the computer screen. "Maybe it's nonmetallic, not wood. It could be wax."

Next up is the work to assemble the scans to "reconstruct it so we can give you a better picture," he said - and once that happens, maybe the images on the screen "will ring a bell."

(c) 2011, Newsday.

Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune Information Services.

Citation: Scan of mummified remains indicates female was a teen at time of death (2011, May 2) retrieved 23 April 2024 from

<https://phys.org/news/2011-05-scan-mummified-female-teen-death.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--