

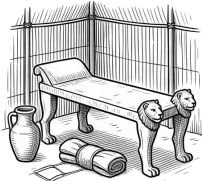


MAKING A MUMMY



Egyptians believed the spirit needed its body in the afterlife. Embalmers, some of them priests, spent about 70 days preserving a body. We know the steps from mummies studied by scientists and from the Greek writer Herodotus, who described them around 450 BC. Wealthy families paid for this full method.

1



Wash the body

The body is carried to the embalmers' workshop and laid on a sloping table. It is washed with Nile water and palm wine to clean it.

2



Remove the brain

An embalmer pushes a long metal hook up through the nose and draws out the brain. Egyptians thought the brain was not important, so it was thrown away.

3



Remove the organs

A cut is made in the left side of the belly. The lungs, liver, stomach and intestines are taken out, dried, and later kept in four canopic jars. The heart stays inside.

4



Dry with natron

The body is packed and covered with natron, a natural salt that soaks up water. It lies in the natron for about 40 days until it is completely dry.

5



Fill and oil the body

The natron is cleared away. The body is stuffed with linen and sawdust to keep its shape, then rubbed with oils and resin to keep the skin from cracking.

6



Wrap in linen

Over about 15 days, the body is wrapped in hundreds of yards of linen strips. Amulets, small charms for protection, are tucked between the layers while a priest says spells.

7



Into the coffin

A mask is placed over the head and the mummy is laid in a coffin. About 70 days after death, the funeral is held and the mummy is placed in its tomb.