



## WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE

Last year, University of Pittsburgh medical student Tanya Lucio started working with a patient who hadn't been to a doctor in 2,300 years.

With a team of experts from the School of Medicine and Carnegie Museum of Natural History, she has been using a CT scanner to investigate the life and death of an Egyptian child mummy.

Lucio, in her second year of med school, has come up with a plausible diagnosis of the disease that led to the demise of the 3- or 4-year-old boy with matted hair—some form of hydrocephalus.

Not every practitioner of Egyptian mortuary science during Dynasty XXX of the Early Ptolemaic period (from 380 to 250 BCE) knew what he was doing, Lucio surmises:

“They dislodged the head during the mortuary process and took a piece of hard papyrus and shoved it down the spinal column to keep the head from lolling around.”

The mummy's heart was the only organ not removed during embalming; it shifted to the right side of the chest cavity in the millennia since the boy's death.

Lucio became involved with the project through a School of Medicine/Museum of Natural History elective. She is thinking of becoming a pediatric radiologist or pediatric surgeon. In the meantime, Lucio aims to find out exactly what kind of hydrocephalus afflicted her very old pediatric patient.

—Joe Miksch

—Large photo by Jeff Towers,  
Inset photo by Sandra Beard