

After death, the pharaohs of Egypt were mummified and buried in elaborate tombs. During the mummification process, which took seventy days, the ancient Egyptians removed all the moisture from the body using a salt called natron. An important part of the process was to remove and store the dead body's organs, all except the heart. The heart remained in the body, as it was believed that to enter the afterlife, the heart was weighed to determine whether the person had lived a good life or not. The remaining organs were placed into special jars known as the canopic jars.

The ancient Egyptians believed that, once in the afterlife, the parts of the body would be put back together, just like the god Osiris. It is believed that Osiris himself was re-assembled by the goddess Isis before he became the god of the afterlife.

Canopic jars were highly decorative jars and were commonly either carved from limestone or made of pottery. Each of the four jars used during the mummification process had a different head on the lid. These four heads represented the sons of the god Horus and were entrusted to protect the dead body's organs. Hapi the baboon protected the lungs, Qebehnsenuf the falcon guarded the intestines, Duamatef the jackal guarded the stomach and Imsety the human guarded the liver.