



Tim Russert's Sudden Cardiac Death May Have Been Preventable

"Nearly 500,000 Americans die of [sudden cardiac death](#) per year in a similar way as the unfortunate and untimely passing of [Mr. Tim Russert](#)," according to Beverly Hills cardiologist, [Dr. Norman Lepor](#), of [Westside Medical Associates of Los Angeles](#). He adds that, "sudden cardiac death is caused by abnormal heart rhythm, ventricular tachycardia/fibrillation or asystole. These are brought on by severe coronary artery disease that is the underlying cause of the heart attack." Based on the autopsy of Mr. Russert's heart, he had suffered from coronary artery disease for some time before he had the heart attack. "Therefore, the opportunity would have been available for someone like Mr. Russert to undergo 64 slice coronary CT to identify the presence of coronary artery disease before it causes symptoms, heart attack and sudden cardiac death." With coronary artery disease identified early, the use of medications including statin drugs to lower cholesterol, aspirin as well as dieting and exercise would lower the risk of heart attack by over 50%. Dr. Lepor adds, "64 slice coronary CT, which was pioneered by my group at [Westside Medical Imaging](#), takes advantage of super fast CT scan technology along with very sophisticated software to take exquisite pictures of the coronary arteries identifying both non-calcified and calcified plaques." The recently reported on [SHAPE guidelines](#) for coronary artery screening recommends that any male > 45 years of age and female > 55 with any one risk factor for coronary artery disease (elevated cholesterol, high blood pressure, any significant smoking history, diabetes, obesity) should undergo this type of screening procedure. In addition to screening with coronary CT which is the most effective screening modality, other approaches include coronary calcium score and measuring [carotid-intimal medial thickening](#), all of which are available at Westside Medical Associates of Los Angeles.

For further information, please contact Westside Medical Associates of Los Angeles at 310-623 -1150 or check our website at www.westsidemedimaging.com.