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Non-Runner Dies While Not Running

By Mark Remy (Runner's World)



A Mississippi man died yesterday while not running in a local marathon.

Les Actiff, 43, of Jackson, Miss., collapsed while watching television in his Hattiesburg home. Attempts to revive him failed, and paramedics pronounced him dead at the scene.

He was still clutching a bucket of fried chicken and according to those who knew him, he had been a non-runner for more than 20 years.

Family members were stunned.

"I don't get it," said his wife, Bess. "He didn't run all his life. He was always so inactive. And now, this. You just never know, I guess."

"At least he died doing what he loved," she added. "Not running."

Spectators gathered outside Actiff's home were similarly shocked.

"I'll never not run," said one woman. "It's too dangerous."

A large man on a scooter, out walking his dog, was more fatalistic: "If you can avoid doing a single positive thing for your health your whole life, just sit around like a lump and eat poorly and then *still* drop dead... Well, I just don't know. I guess when it's your time, it's your time."

Actiff appears to have died from atherosclerotic heart disease, according to Lamar County Coroner Paul Caste.

A memorial service is planned for Saturday, at the Pizza Hut off of I-59.