



Photo Illustration The Daily Beast -- Original article found online at:
<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2016/06/29/cops-doctor-stole-fentanyl-for-illegal-abortions.html>



Samantha Allen

Quackery 06.29.16 12:00 AM ET

Cops: Doctor Stole Fentanyl for Illegal Abortions

A Michigan doctor found with human tissue in his car—and who allegedly stole fentanyl for illegal abortions—has been charged with a slew of crimes.

It was a car crash of all things that gave him away.

In September 2015, Michigan abortion doctor [Michael Arthur Roth](#) asked the West Bloomfield police to retrieve some items from his car, which had been impounded after an accident. But when police looked inside the vehicle, they found painkillers and containers of human tissue stashed in the trunk and glove box.

The medical examiner later determined that the containers held products of conception—a medical term for tissue left over after an abortion, birth, or miscarriage.

Now, nine months after the discovery, Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette is [charging](#) the 74-year-old doctor with possession with intent to deliver the narcotic [fentanyl](#), six counts of identity theft, and three counts of larceny. Roth may also have his license suspended for violating the Michigan public health code.

“Dr. Roth’s actions jeopardized the safety of Michigan’s healthcare system,” said Schuette in a [press release](#) accompanying the charges, filed last Thursday. “His attempt to break the law at the expense of his patient’s safety is not only illegal, but goes against the code he took upon becoming a doctor.”

The attorney general’s investigation uncovered evidence that suggests Roth may have been illegally performing abortions outside of a clinic.

In the [case background](#), the attorney general’s office noted that fentanyl is “commonly used as a sedative during [pregnancy] termination procedures,” and that a medical assistant in a clinic Roth worked out of allegedly stole “medications used in abortions from the clinic for Roth” including misoprostol, a pill used in [medical, or non-surgical, abortion](#).

The operator of that Eastpointe, Michigan, clinic, Dr. Angel Ojeda, said that he never gave Roth permission to take the medications.

After searching Roth’s home and his office, investigators also say they found a “large amount” of cash, separated into bundles.



Handout

“This currency was divided and bundled with a paperclip,” a West Bloomfield detective wrote in a supporting affidavit reviewed by The Daily Beast. “On the bundle would be a small yellow

sticky paper which had the last name of a person, and information that is believed to be the length of a person's pregnancy (i.e. 18 [weeks]) with an amount also listed (i.e. 250)."

Investigators also discovered syringes, disposable scalpels, and empty containers matching the full ones found in his car. On top of that, they found more vials of fentanyl, which were allegedly stolen from Ojeda's clinic. One employee had allegedly spotted Roth leaving the clinic with a syringe in his pocket, prompting her to yell "Dr. Roth gotta fentanyl," according to the affidavit.

In Roth's car, police allegedly found six prescriptions for an antibiotic commonly used during abortions. The women for whom those six prescriptions were written were patients of Ojeda's who told police that they did not even know Roth. This led to the six charges of identity theft against the doctor.

The attorney general's investigators also claimed that they spoke with a woman for whom Roth performed two at-home abortions in the late '90s.

This is not the first time Roth has found himself in hot water for alleged medical malpractice.

As The Daily Beast previously [reported](#), the Michigan Department of Community Health [warned Roth](#) in April 2004 to "never perform a pregnancy termination procedure outside of an approved clinic/hospital/office setting," fined him \$15,000, and put him on probation.

Get The Beast In Your Inbox!

Daily Digest Start and finish your day with the top stories from The Daily Beast.

Cheat Sheet A speedy, smart summary of all the news you need to know (and nothing you don't).

By clicking "Subscribe," you agree to have read the [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)

That discipline came shortly after an October 2003 [administrative complaint](#) from the Department of Consumer and Industry Services, which contains further details about the two at-home abortions Roth allegedly performed in the '90s.

According to that complaint, a 41-year-old woman allegedly asked Roth to perform an abortion in her home in December 1998 because she was agoraphobic, or afraid of open spaces. In reality, she was a "bartender," not an agoraphobe, and Roth "never saw her before performing the procedure," according to the complaint.

The following October, he allegedly performed another abortion for her in her home, once again "because of her alleged agoraphobia."

In December 2012, Roth was [fined \\$2,000](#) for [alleged practices](#) that evidenced "negligence," "incompetence," and "lack of good moral character."

All of the charges the doctor now faces are felony charges carrying lengthy prison sentences or hefty fines. The most serious, possession of fentanyl, carries a 20-year sentence and/or a \$25,000 fine.

Roth himself could not be reached for comment as the phone number associated with his last known address had been disconnected. One of the last times the doctor spoke publicly to the press was when [WJBK](#) confronted him as he left the police station last year.

He hid his face in his jacket and said, "Just go away."