

Original article found online at: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3282811/Judge-says-fake-doctor-danger-community-serial-killer-prosecutors-link-three-deaths.html>

Judge says 'fake doctor' presents 'more of a danger to the community than a serial killer' as prosecutors link him with three deaths

- **Rick Van Thiel is accused of acting as doctor without license in Las Vegas**
- **Prosecutors say the 52-year-old is linked to the deaths of three people**
- **He allegedly prescribed 'black market steroids' and blood-thinning drugs and had kept the records of least 87 of his 'patients'**
- **In a jail interview, he said he treated people for cancer and HIV, among other serious diseases**
- **He previously produced porn movies before becoming a 'doctor'**
- **Bail stands at \$1million despite application for it to be lowered to \$20,000**
- **Judge said Van Thiel 'seems to present more of a danger than a serial rapist or a serial murderer'**
- **He added that the suspect 'appears to be preying upon people who can't access health care'**

- **Van Thiel is being held on unrelated firearms charges but could face further charges, including second-degree murder and sexual assault**

By [Julian Robinson for MailOnline](#)

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Rick Van Thiel (pictured) is accused of acting as a doctor without a license at an address in east Las Vegas Valley, Nevada

A 'fake doctor' believed to be linked to the deaths of three people has been described by a judge as 'more of a danger to the community than a serial killer'.

Rick Van Thiel, 52, is accused of acting as a doctor without a license at a trailer in east Las Vegas Valley, Nevada.

In a jail interview, Van Thiel admitted he treated people for cancer and HIV, among other serious diseases, according to the [Review Journal](#).

He has reportedly said that he learned about medicine from YouTube videos.

Among 140 items taken from his trailer by investigating officers were 'black market steroids, blood thinning drugs, and bags containing something that looked like blood'.

Van Thiel is currently being detained on two counts of ownership or possession of a firearm by a prohibited person.

It could take months before further charges are filled against him, prosecutor Marc DiGiacomo said. He added that he intends to seek second-degree murder charges for Van Thiel's 'reckless disregard'.

No further details were given about how Van Thiel is linked to the deaths of three people who asked him for treatment.

The prosecutor is also pursuing sexual assault charges against him. In September, Van Thiel is said to have performed sexual acts on a woman who went to him for an abortion.

He said in an interview with the Review-Journal that he was in porn production before being sentenced to four years in prison on a 2007 battery charge.

His footage and equipment was stolen, he said, and after that he decided to go into the medical field.

He claimed he had studied health and anatomy for 28 years and only treated people who consented, at his 'practice' in Monroe Avenue. He does not have a degree or a medical licence.

Las Vegas Justice of the Peace Ann Zimmerman ruled on Tuesday that a jury should decide on current firearms charges against Van Thiel.

She also ordered Van Thiel's bail to stand at \$1 million - saying he 'seems to present more of a danger to the community than a serial rapist or a serial murderer because he appears to be preying upon people who can't access healthcare'.

Public defender Steven Lisk had asked Zimmerman to reduce Rick Van Thiel's bail to \$20,000, partly because he has not yet been charged in the deaths.

Another one of Van Thiel's lawyers, Scott Coffee, said outside court that \$1million was the 'highest bail I've seen in 20 years' on the firearm possession charges, according to the Review Journal.

He added that prosecutors have declined to turn over copies of search warrants executed on Van Thiel's residence, and that 'made me leery about the strength of the state's case'.

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[Video courtesy of KSNV - News 3LV](#)



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Investigators searched the residence at East Monroe Avenue (pictured), on September 30 and shut down the practice

The practice was shut down on September 30 after Las Vegas police and FBI agents executed the search warrant.

The search revealed that Van Thiel kept records on at least 87 so-called "patients", according to prosecutors.

Van Thiel was arrested on October 7. He's being held at Clark County Detention Center. It is unclear when his next court date is, but the current case is expected to be presented to a grand jury.

One of Van Thiel's lawyers questioned the strength of the state's case claiming prosecutors had not handed over copies of search warrants carried out at the house.

Investigators searched the residence at East Monroe Avenue, on September 30 and shut down the practice.

Earlier this month it was reported that he was sometimes referred to as 'Dr Rick' while arrest records say his services were advertised on Craigslist across Utah, Arizona and Nevada.

Van Thiel told [KSNV-TV](#) that he's a 'sovereign citizen' who learned medicine via YouTube, books and videos.

Sovereign citizens declare themselves above federal jurisdiction and don't believe they should pay taxes.

On his website, Van Thiel offered 'Sovereign Babies' - delivering children in his trailer without a birth certificate and telling parents that when the child is 18 they would have the choice to be a 'free being or to become a slave'.

A police report obtained Thursday links Van Thiel with a 69-year-old woman accused in 2013 of plotting with another anti-government believer to kill Las Vegas police.

She was eventually convicted of misdemeanor conspiracy and received probation.

Read more:

- [Alleged fake doctor more dangerous than serial killer, Las Vegas judge says | Las Vegas Review-Journal](#)
- [FULL INTERVIEW: Fake doctor, Rick Van Thiel, says he learned surgical procedures on YouTube - News3LV](#)

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