Suspect Blames Surgery For Urologist Killing

Gillian Flaccus & Robert Jablon, AP

A retired barber who told neighbors he blamed prostate surgery for his ill health, is scheduled in court for the first time Wednesday on charges he shot a California urologist to death in his exam room. It's unclear if Dr. Ronald Franklin Gilbert, the 52-year-old victim of Monday's shooting, was the physician who treated Stanwood Fred Elkus, 75, for prostate problems. Neighbors said Elkus was angry about his incontinence following a recent surgery.

Elkus was jailed on $1 million bail after police said he shot Gilbert multiple times in the affluent coastal city of Newport Beach in suburban Orange County. The urologist appeared to be the only target of the attack, police spokeswoman Kathy Lowe said. Elkus was plagued by prostate troubles and was upset by a surgery that left him running to the bathroom constantly, sometimes in mid-conversation, neighbors said. "One day we were talking about other things outside and he says, 'Oh hold it right there!' and he was rushing to his house and when he came back, he said, 'I have a problem with my prostate,'" recalled Miguel Soto, who lives across the street.

"He said, 'I had surgery and now I am worse than before the surgery.'" Soto said Elkus never named his doctor, and Soto did not know if it was Gilbert.

A few weeks ago, Elkus said he would be away from home because he was checking into a hospital again, but when Soto saw him last week, he didn't mention his health, the neighbor said. Another neighbor, James Lord, said Elkus mentioned Sunday that "he wasn't going to be around much longer." "I told him, 'No Stan, you're gonna outlive me,'" Lord said.

Detectives recovered a handgun at the scene of the shooting and found additional evidence at Elkus' home in Lake Elsinore, but police declined to provide details. Gilbert worked in general urology, sexual dysfunction and related surgical techniques, including vasectomies, bladder and prostate cancer, according to his biography on the website of the Orange Coast Urology Group, which he joined in 1993. One of his specialties involved using a laser to vaporize prostate tissue blocking the urinary tract.

He decided to become a doctor mainly because his late father was a physician, the biography said, adding that Gilbert had been a stockbroker and a singer in a rock band. He had worked for 20 years at Hoag Hospital and was its former urology chief.

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