

YANKEES

Alex Rodriguez's cousin Yuri Sucart pleads guilty

TERI THOMPSON, CHRISTIAN RED, MICHAEL O'KEEFFE

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Yuri Sucart (l.) arrives in federal court in Miami accompanied by his lawyer, Edward O'Donnell IV.

MIAMI - Yuri Sucart entered the courthouse Friday wearing a dark suit that hung on his weakened frame. He supported himself with a walker and steadied himself on the arm of his lawyer, a shell of the man once described by the government as a major distributor of steroids and human growth hormone in the **criminal prosecution of the Biogenesis doping case** that ensnared eight

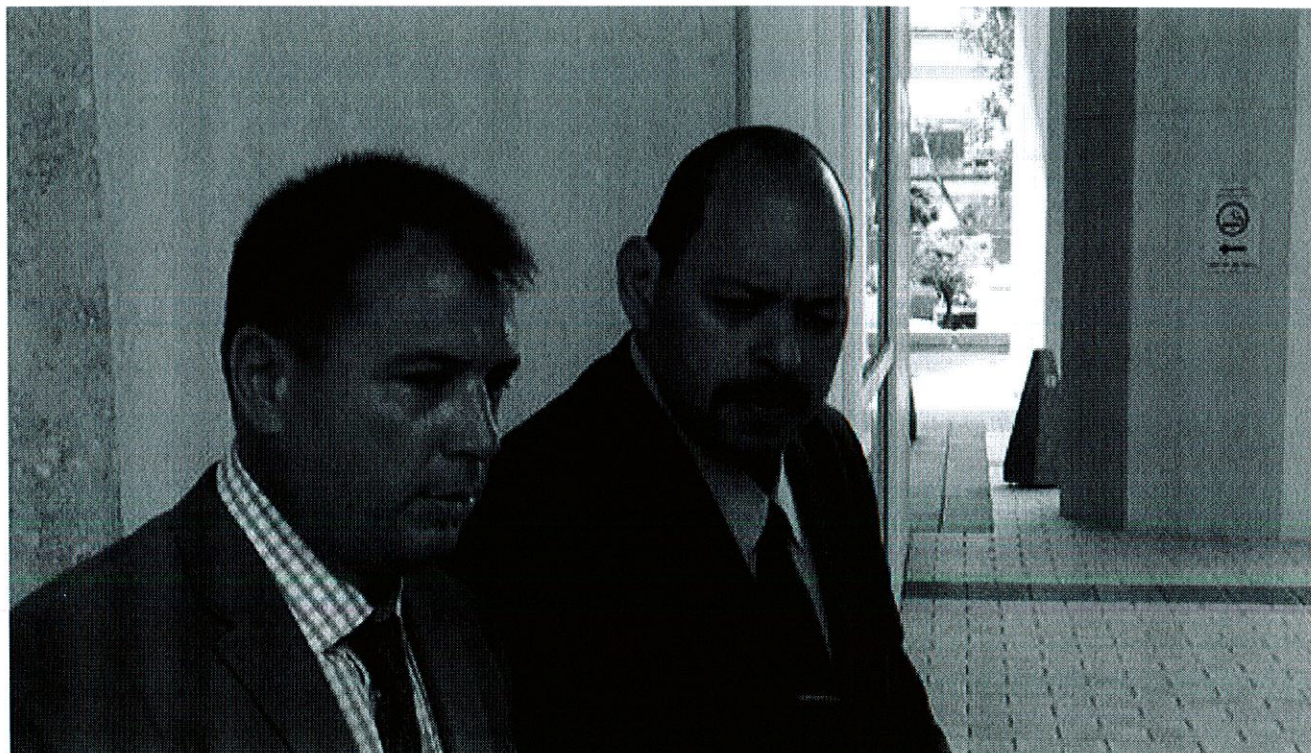
defendants and a slew of Major League Baseball players, including Sucart's famous cousin, Alex Rodriguez.

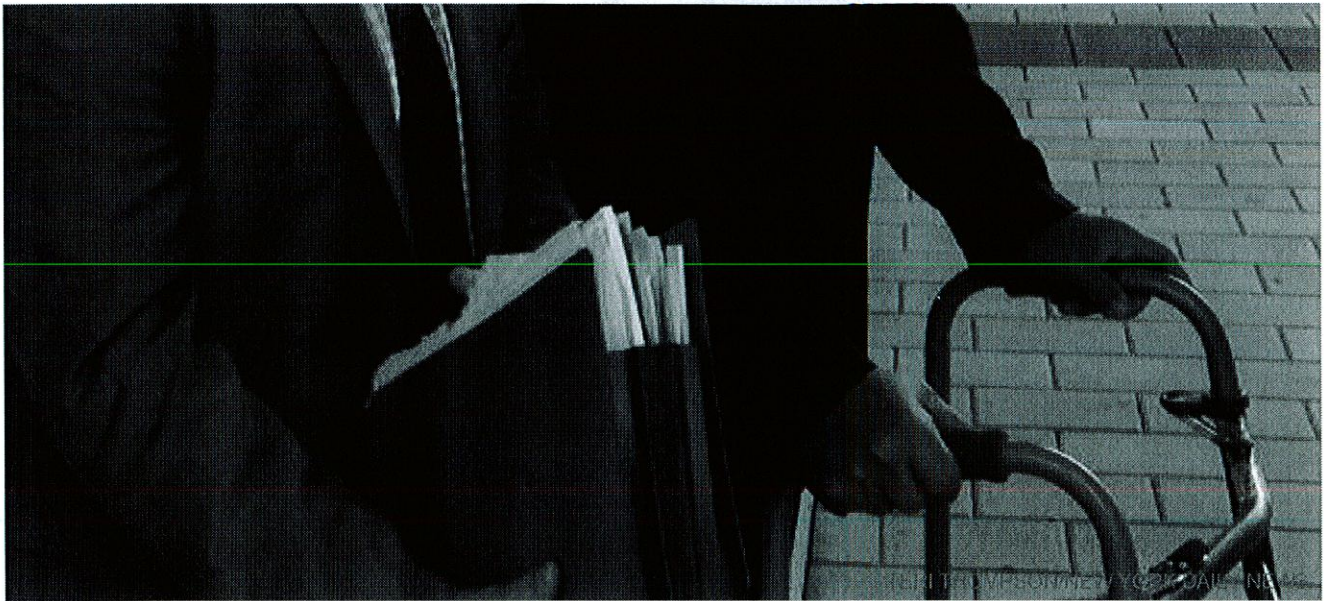
Sucart pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court in Miami to one count of conspiracy to distribute HGH in a change of plea hearing at the Wilkie D. Ferguson U.S. Courthouse, hardly the figure caught on wiretaps by confidential informants and an undercover agent working for the DEA in New York and Miami, as Sucart made controlled buys of banned substances and directed clients to Anthony Bosch's infamous clinic. And he certainly wasn't the "Cousin Yuri" Rodriguez described in 2009 as the drug mule who provided A-Rod with the HGH and steroids the one-time superstar would eventually cop to using to federal agents and Major League Baseball officials.

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The 52-year-old Sucart now appears to be a defeated man, ravaged by heart trouble, circulation problems, near-diabetes and a tumor in his head. He is basically broke and fighting to stay out of jail. His lawyer, Miami defense attorney Edward O'Donnell IV, will ask Judge Cecilia M. Altonaga to sentence Sucart to four months house arrest when he returns to her courtroom on June 4 based on his health issues, while prosecutors will ask the judge to send him to prison for eight months.

Sucart recruited Major League Baseball players for the now-defunct clinic, according to a court document read by Altonaga. The "doctor" turned out to be Bosch, who was not licensed to practice medicine in Florida but charged the athletes \$19,000 a month to participate in his doping program, which included human growth hormone delivered by Sucart.





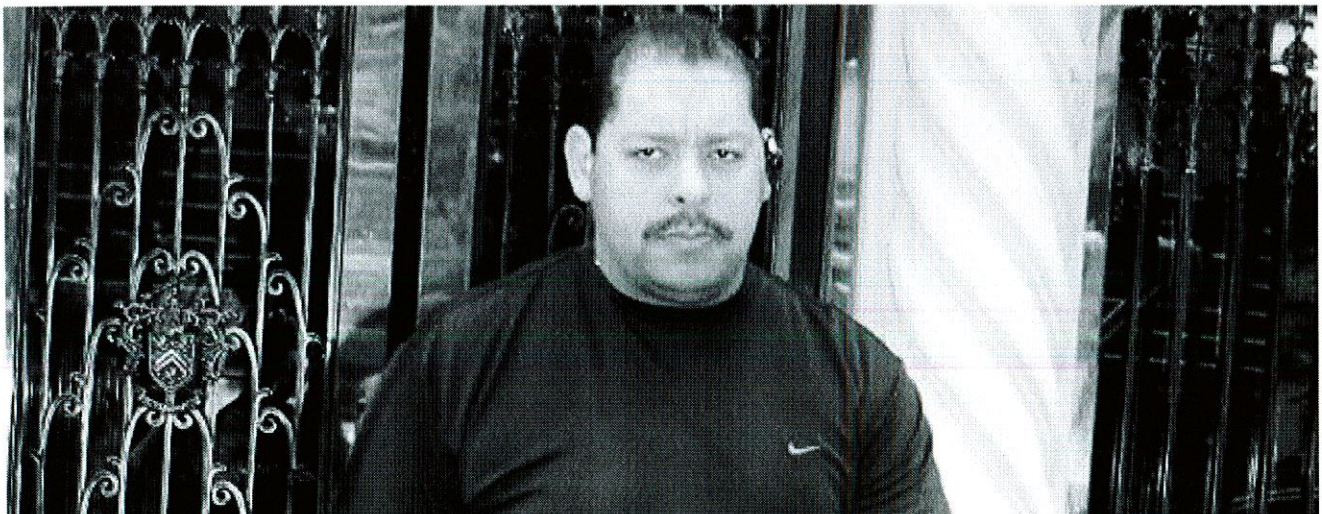
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"You actively recruited the players, who you told could get help getting bigger and recovering from injuries faster," Altonaga said.

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Sucart's plea agreement does not compel him to cooperate with government investigators, said O'Donnell, who added that his client was eager to put the case behind him so he could focus on his family and his future.

"Mr. Sucart was always willing to accept responsibility for what he did and only what he did," O'Donnell said after the hearing. "This plea agreement allows everyone to know, including the court, what he did and why he did it, and under what conditions. There's no hiding that. There's never been any hiding that."





MICHAEL SCHWARTZ FOR NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

Yuri Sucart, seen here in a file photo, recruited MLB players for the Biogenesis Clinic.

The court document also said Sucart and Biogenesis co-defendant Carlos Acevedo, who was **sentenced to 42 months in prison** earlier this year for conspiracy to distribute testosterone and the club drug "Molly," delivered a box containing syringes filled with performance-enhancing drugs to a confidential government informant (CS) on Dec. 14, 2012 in Miami. The informant told Acevedo and Sucart the drugs were for players, ages 17 to 19, who hoped to receive college baseball scholarships.

"At the conclusion of the meeting, SUCART drove the CS to Fort Lauderdale International Airport where the CS paid SUCART \$3,000 for the PEDs," the document said.

Sucart also sold performance-enhancing drugs to an undercover agent on three separate occasions between February and April 2013, the court filing said.

O'Donnell acknowledged after the hearing Friday that Sucart sold to the undercover agent. "Mr. Sucart, when he was first arrested, fully acknowledged that there was a lady that he met at a restaurant and did exactly what we finally ultimately agreed to with the government," O'Donnell said in reference to the agent. "That was, without his knowledge, that it was on tape."



Yuri Sucart calls Alex Rodriguez 'my family' on Friday and says 'I can't be mad at him.'

Bosch, who became a witness in the Major League Baseball investigation that landed Rodriguez with a season-long doping suspension, was also caught on the wiretaps, discussing everything from buying cocaine to advising his co-conspirators to try to shake down players for money to keep quiet about what was going on with Biogenesis. Bosch, who eventually became a cooperating government witness, is serving a four-year sentence for conspiracy to distribute testosterone.

The guilty plea brings a measure of closure to Sucart's long ordeal, which began over two decades ago when A-Rod was signed by the Mariners as the No. 1 draft pick. Sucart became the slugger's

unofficial go-fer, and remained mostly anonymous until Rodriguez identified him at the 2009 Tampa press conference when Rodriguez admitted to his doping past. Sucart was later banned from clubhouses and traveling entourages by Major League Baseball, targeted by MLB in its Biogenesis probe and charged by federal prosecutors in connection with the federal case. Rodriguez was offered limited immunity by federal authorities.

According to Carmen Sucart, Yuri's wife, Rodriguez also made threats to the Sucart family, and once appeared at the Sucarts' Miami home and **urinated on the outside wall**, Carmen says, as a way of marking his territory. She also said that Rodriguez tried to make her sign a confidentiality agreement in 2012 and offered this ominous remark: "(Rodriguez) threatened me, telling me if I talk, he will destroy my family," Carmen Sucart said. "He said, 'I got money and I got lawyers. And if you sue me? Be ready.'"

Asked Friday if he was angry at his superstar cousin, who is in Tampa at the Yankees' spring training site, Sucart said in Spanish: "He's my family. I can't be mad at him. I don't have anything negative to say."

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