

## **Disgraced Former US Cyclist Paid \$40,000 A Year For Doping**

[Tyler Hamilton](#) told a Spanish court on Tuesday that he paid tens of thousands of euros (dollars) a year to Spanish doctor Eufemiano Fuentes and bought the blood booster EPO, testosterone, growth hormone, and insulin off Fuentes.

The disgraced cyclist told the court that he used blood doping some 15 times and was associated with the doctor at the heart of the Operation Puerto scandal for blood doping and other drug supply services to boost his performance in competitions.

Fuentes, his sister and fellow doctor, Yolanda, Manolo Saiz, a former ONCE and Liberty Seguros team sports director, and Vicente Belda and Ignacio Labarta, both associated with the former Kelme team, are on trial in a Madrid court for endangering public health.

The former teammate of banned cyclist Lance Armstrong, Hamilton said he paid between 25,000 and 30,000 for the services in 2002 and 2003. Hamilton also said he agreed to pay 50,000 (\$US67,000) for 2004, but was not able to complete the treatment as he tested positive for receiving someone else's blood in September 2004. The cyclist was stripped of his gold medal from the 2004 Athens Olympics last year after confessing to doping.

Meanwhile, the judge announced that Alberto Contador, the two-time winner of Tour de France and one of 50 cyclists implicated in the Puerto investigation, would not be required to appear in court. The attorney for defendant Saiz, Ignacio Arroyo, said at the end of hearing on Tuesday that he renounced the witness statement he had requested from Contador. The judge then ruled that the rider's presence would no longer be necessary because Arroyo had been the only trial participant to request testimony from Contador.

A former professional rider for the US Postal and [CSC team](#), Tyler Hamilton, among others, said he first met the Spanish doctor at a rest area "on the highway between Barcelona and Valencia" in Spain "to fix up blood transfusions" and "to plan for the future."

Hamilton told the court the worst reaction he had was in 2004 when he had a reinfusion during the Tour de France and as far as he could tell the blood hadn't been stored properly and said he knew something was not working out as it should when he went to the bathroom 35-40 minutes later and found his urine was black. On 11 September, 2004, Hamilton while riding in Spain's Vuelta, tested positive for "mixed blood cell population," or receiving someone else's blood. The cyclist, under cross-examination, also remarked that he had heard that another rider in his team, Santiago Perez, had also tested positive for the same reason. Tyler Hamilton said he knew Perez and other riders also used the blood doping services of Fuentes as they had flown together from Lyon in France to Madrid, during the Dauphine Libere race, to get infused. Hamilton, when asked who had put him in contact with Fuentes, said that one-time Tour de France and Giro d'Italia winner "Bjarne Riis, general manager of team CSC, put me in touch with him."