Q Is that an uncommon occurrence in cases of mesothelioma, Doctor?

A Well, I think in 1980 it was not uncommon. In the 1990s, more commonly, physicians are aware of the association of asbestos and mesothelioma and more commonly take down a history, but I think at that time it was not uncommon.

Q Now, from your review of the medical records, how did Mr. Vandergucht -- what caused him to go to the hospital?

A He had what they thought was an umbilical hernia. His umbilicus or belly button had a protrusion from it, and it was thought that there was an outpouching of the peritoneum there with intestines or whatever being able to move through that pouching.

That is why he went to the doctor. That umbilical hernia was treated by surgery and was cut out, and the surgeon at that time noted that the underlying tissue was hard and thickened, but at that time the surgeon did not recognize that it was cancerous until it was sent to the Pathology