

Russia's Sharapova's Ban From Tennis Is Reduced

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Russian tennis star Maria Sharapova can return to competition in 2017 after her two-year suspension for taking meldonium [was reduced by nine months](#).

The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in Lausanne, Switzerland reduced the ban for the former world champion on Tuesday, as was widely expected.

It leaves the door open for Sharapova to return to competitive tennis from April next year, 15 months after testing positive for the banned substance Meldonium, a heart disease drug, in January this year.

In a statement on social media, the athlete, a five-time Grand Slam winner, said she was "counting the days" until her return and also thanked her fans for their support.

CAS ruled that Sharapova was not trying to cheat, but stated that she "bore significant fault for her violation" and failed to give her agent adequate instructions" to check WADA's banned

substance list.

Since announcing her suspension in March, Sharapova has taken personal responsibility for having taken the drug, which she says she took for ten years as a treatment for pre-diabetes.

In her statement, Sharapova said she hoped the ITF and anti-doping authorities could use her case to improve its practices of notifying athletes of changes to banned substance lists, “so no other tennis player goes through what I went through.”

There is still no consensus on how much time it takes for the drug to leave the human body and therefore whether athletes were given sufficient warning before it was placed on the World Anti-Doping Agency’s (WADA) list of banned substances from Jan. 1 this year.

Following her ban, however, it was widely reported that Sharapova had received five notifications from tennis authorities that the drug would be banned in the month before the ban came into force.

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