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Meldonium Sales in Russia Soar After Star Athletes Implicated in Doping

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Donat Sorokin / TASS

Sales of the meldonium performance-enhancing drug grew in Russia this year after several celebrity athletes have been implicated in doping scandals linked to the substance.

The news of the jump in sales comes one day after the International Olympic Committee (IOC) ruled to ban Russia's entire Olympic team from participating in the 2018 Winter Games.

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) banned meldonium in January 2016, but more than 100 Russian athletes tested positive for the drug after the ban took effect, including tennis star Maria Sharapova.

Related article: Russian Anti-Doping Agency Uncovers 100 Violations in 2016

"Many people learned about meldonium after last year's scandal," a marketing specialist told

RIA Novosti. “This year, sales have continued to grow.”

Russian sales of the substance reportedly grew by 20 percent between January and August of this year.

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