

Russian Football Union Instructs Players Not to Smoke Hookah Ahead of World Cup

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The Russian Football Union has issued instructions for its players to avoid testing positive for doping ahead of the 2018 World Cup this summer, including advice not to drink exotic teas or smoke flavored tobacco.

Russia hosts the World Cup in 11 cities between June and July this year, as FIFA continues a doping investigation into past samples provided by players from Russia's national team.

Related article: [FIFA to Test Russian Soccer Team for Suspected Doping](#)

RFU's extensive list of recommendations to its members Friday includes "not smoking hookah" and "not consuming exotic teas."

“Always remind doctors that you’re an athlete who may be subject to doping tests,” the union tweeted.

Its guidance appears to harken back to an incident in 2009 in which stars players of Russia’s team were seen smoking hookah and drinking alcohol in Moscow before a key qualification match against Slovenia.

The Russian team was knocked out over the course of two matches by Slovenia due to an away goal that was conceded after the hookah-smoking incident in Moscow, thus losing a chance to compete in the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa.

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