

Backstrom Misses Gold Medal Olympic Hockey Game

[Washington Capitals](#) center Nicklas Backstrom was pulled from the lineup of Sweden lineup hours before the Olympic gold medal hockey game against Canada. This was after Backstrom tested positive for a banned substance found in his allergy medication.

The test result of Nicklas Backstrom showed an elevated level of pseudoephedrine that is prohibited by the International Olympic Committee but not the NHL. However, the violation of the IOC's anti-doping policy is not expected to prevent the Washington Capitals center from playing with the Capitals when their season resumes. The timing of Backstrom and the fact that he was taking the medication with the approval of the Swedish national team doctor raises questions about the testing process of the International Olympic Committee. Mark Aubry, chief medical officer for the International Ice Hockey Federation, said there certainly is no doping in this instance and added Backstrom is an innocent victim, and we support him strongly. Aubry added doping is certainly not allowed, but this is not a case of [doping](#).

At a news conference, Backstrom said he had absolutely nothing to hide and disclosed that he had allergy problems. Backstrom remarked he had been there for two weeks and it was probably the most fun two weeks he have ever had. Backstrom added he was ready to play probably the biggest game of my career, and two and a half hours before the game he got pulled aside.

Backstrom had taken Zyrtec-D, a permitted drug although it contains pseudoephedrine, for seven years for treating sinusitis. The drug is allowed by the International Olympic Committee as long as levels do not exceed 150 micrograms per milliliter and is not tested outside of competition. According to Aurby, Backstrom's level was 190.

Backstrom was tested after Sweden's quarterfinal win over Slovenia, but neither he nor team officials were informed of the positive result until hours before the gold medal game that was after four days. The IOC defended itself by saying it had too many tests to process to deliver the result sooner. Mathieu Schneider, NHL Players Association official, remarked he didn't see IOC statement as an acceptable explanation and cited a similar situation during the 2010 Vancouver Olympics, when defenseman Lubomir Visnovsky of Slovakia tested positive for elevated pseudoephedrine levels but was allowed to be retested after two years and was ultimately allowed to play. Schneider remarked this process was flawed and added he thinks it is clear that he wasn't intending to cheat, that he wasn't [doping](#) and went on to add that doping is a very serious allegation, and at some point common sense should have prevailed, and it clearly did not. The ineligibility of Backstrom left Sweden, already without stars Henrik Zetterberg (because of herniated disk) and Henrik Sedin (because of injury to ribs), to miss their top remaining center and they lost the gold medal game to the Canadians, 3-0.

Swedish national hockey team general manger Tommy Boustedt accused the International Olympic Committee of sabotaging their medal dream and said he thinks

they waited until it would be a real good impact with journalists. After the loss in the gold medal game, Boustedt said he thinks they had the results earlier but chose to hold onto them and they need examples to show they don't accept doping but this isn't it.