

Lee Chong Wei To Be Banned For Eight Months

[Lee Chong Wei](#), Malaysian Chinese professional badminton player, will be banned for eight months from competitive badminton. Wei was facing a two-year ban but news of this reduced suspension has delighted him and his fans.

According to media reports, the ban on Wei would be backdated from August 30 last year and he will now be able to compete in competitions from May 1. This also means Lee Chong Wei can now compete in the Sudirman Cup in Dongguan next month and the World Championships in Jakarta in August and the [SEA Games](#) in Singapore in June.

Wei tested positive for Dexamethasone, a banned anti-inflammatory drug, at the World Championships in Copenhagen last year where he lost in the final to China's Chen Long. The Badminton World Federation (BWF) temporarily suspended Wei who claimed he received the drug for injury treatment in July last year.

Malaysian Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin had remarked Dexamethasone was not administered to Datuk Lee Chong Wei by doctors at the National Sports Institute (ISN) but by a specialist sports clinic in Kuala Lumpur as part of stem cell treatment for an injury. Jamaluddin added Dexamethasone is allowed for out-of-competition athletes seeking treatment for injuries and also had said that traces remain in the body for 10 days but in this case, we are not sure why it lasted longer than that.

The entire country supported its most favorite sports icon. Dr Patrick Yung Shu-hang, executive director of the Hong Kong Jockey Club Sports Medicine and Health Sciences Centre, said using Dexamethasone to improve the performance of a badminton player would have minimal impact and he had great sympathy for Lee.

Yung, who is also a consultant in the Department of Orthopedics & Traumatology of Prince Wales Hospital, said Dexamethasone is a kind of corticosteroids used therapeutically to treat inflammations, asthma and arthritis and it is different from anabolic steroids which are synthetic substances for promoting the growth of skeletal muscle for the purpose of enhancing sporting performance. Yung also remarked that Dexamethasone is very common in medical treatment and it is not banned during out-of-competition period and said there has long been debate indeed on whether this substance should be removed from the [doping](#) list.

American cyclist Yosmani Pol Rodriguez was banned in 2012 for a period of two years after an in-competition urine sample collected during the Delray Beach Twilight Criterium.

Yung remarked Dexamethasone can help cyclists relieve high-altitude training-related sicknesses such as acute mountain sickness, pulmonary edema and headaches, and hence indirectly enhance performance but he can't see any significant help for a badminton player.

Dr Yvonne Yuan Wai-yi, the former head of the Hong Kong Doping Committee, said if Lee's B sample remains the same, he may only be able to cut down the penalty if he has a very good reason of unintentional use. Yuan added it will be difficult but, on the international scene, there are always political reasons behind final judgments and also remarked if Lee could prove he has no significant fault in the case, a sanction may be reduced.