

Former Doping Cheat Diagnosed With Same Cancer As Lance Armstrong

Two-time former Giro d'Italia winner Ivan Basso has ended his participation in the 2015 Tour de France after revealing he has testicular cancer.

The Italian rider was expected to be a critical support rider for Alberto Contador, one of the favorites, in the mountain stages that start today. However, the 37-year-old said he is heading back to Italy for treatment. Basso said at the [Tinkoff-Saxo](#) team's hotel in Pau on Tour rest day that he had a really small crash and on the crash in stage number five and he touched his testicle on the saddle. Basso, who had been banned for two years for doping in the past, further added that he felt a small pain for a few days and then his doctor spoke with the doctor of the Tour and we decided to go to make a special analysis to the hospital. Basso said the medical examination gave a bad news that he has a small cancer in the left testicle.

Basso said he had to leave but added he wanted to give his support to his captain, [Alberto Contador](#), to be in yellow in Paris and want to say thanks to his team for their support in this situation and the whole Tour organization and medical staff. Upon learning of Basso's medical condition, an emotional Contador said we never imagined something like that and added the news had been hard to take both for him personally and the rest of the team.

Contador, who won his second Giro d'Italia this May, could become the first rider since Marco Pantani (in 1998) to win Giro d'Italia and the Tour de France in the same year.

Steven de Jongh, Head Sport Director of Tinkoff-Saxo, remarked today is not a day to speak about the Tour de France, the days ahead or Alberto's main rivals on the mount stages. Jongh also remarked all that is irrelevant and we are all here solely to support Ivan and the entire team hopes to meet him again in Paris and hand him the yellow jersey.

Lance Armstrong, the former rival of Ivan Basso, survived testicular cancer that spread to his lungs and brain. The disgraced cyclist immediately tweeted his support and tweeted: *"Thinking about @ivanbasso and wishing him the very best as he embarks on his cancer journey. #IvanSTRONG!!"*

The Italian professional road bicycle racer, nicknamed Ivan the Terrible, is considered one of the strongest stage race riders. Basso is regarded by many as among the best mountain riders in the professional field in the 21st century. Basso won the Giro d'Italia twice, one for Team CSC in 2006 and one for Liquigas in 2010.

Basso's not new to controversies. The Tour de France management announced at a press conference on June 30, 2006 that a number of riders, including Basso, would not be riding in the 2006 Tour de France because of rumors of blood doping stemming from the Operación Puerto investigation. It was rumored that Basso received blood doping by the Dr. Fuentes. Basso was acquitted for any involvement in the Operation Puerto events on October 27, 2006 because of insufficient evidence. In 2007, Basso admitted he was planning to use [doping products](#) and was suspended for two years. Basso's suspension ended on October 24, 2008.