

Maria Sharapova Praised By Serena Williams

Serena Williams has applauded her tennis rival Maria Sharapova for the way she disclosed news of her failed [dope test](#).

Serena, the American professional tennis player who is ranked No. 1 in women's [singles tennis](#), said she was stunned by news that the Russian professional tennis player had tested positive for banned substance Meldonium at this year's Australian Open. Williams, a long-time rival of Sharapova, said she thinks most people were surprised and shocked by Maria but at the same time most people were happy that she was just upfront and very honest and showed a lot of courage to admit to what she had done and what she had neglected to look at. Williams said Maria Sharapova has always showed courage in everything that she has done and this is no different and described the announcement of Sharapova as brave.

Sharapova announced the news of her positive test at a press conference in Los Angeles. Sharapova claimed she had simply made a mistake by continuing to take [Mildronate](#) (an anti-ischemic drug), also known as Meldonium, without checking to see if it was banned. Sharapova told the media she had failed to read an email that state that Meldonium had been added to the banned list on January 1, 2016. The tennis star will be provisionally suspended from playing tennis on March 12 and faces the risk of a four-year ban. In January, Meldonium was added to the list of banned performance enhancing drugs.

After the announcement by Sharapova, German car manufacturer Porsche, sportswear giant Nike, and Swiss watchmaker TAG Heuer distanced themselves from sponsorship deals with her. It was announced by TAG Heuer that it would not renew its marketing contract that expired at the end of 2015 with the tennis star. In a statement, Porsche said we regret the news about Maria Sharapova. Until more details are known and we can analyze the situation, we have decided to suspend planned activities with her. In a statement, the unit of French luxury goods group LVMH said Maria Sharapova was under contract with TAG Heuer until December 31, 2015 and added we had been in talks to extend our collaboration. In view of the current situation, the Swiss watch brand has suspended negotiations and has decided not to renew the contract.

Nike and Porsche also suspended their sponsorship of the athlete. Nike said in a statement that we have decided to suspend our relationship with Maria while the investigation continues. The statement further reads that Nike was surprised and saddened by the news.

Meanwhile, the man who created Meldonium said putting the drug on WADA banned list is violation of human rights. Professor Ivar Kalvins said Meldonium is not a performance enhancing drug and added it just helps to protect the athlete's heart from the consequences of physical overwork and that means it watches over health of athletes. Professor Kalvins added to ban this medicine means to ban athletes from taking care of their health and he considers it to be a kind of violation of human rights.