

Sharapova Should Face Suspension For Doping, Says Andy Murray

Tennis world number two [Andy Murray](#) has remarked Maria Sharapova should face suspension after she tested positive for a banned drug to send a strong message to would be drugs cheats.

Murray applauded doping officials for catching one of the most high-profile stars of tennis. Murray said at the Indian Wells tournament in California that the positive thing about what has happened to Maria is she is one of the biggest female athletes on the planet. He added you should be suspended if you take [performance enhancing drugs](#) and you fail a drug test.

Murray went on to criticize [Maria Sharapova](#), the tennis federation, and his racquet sponsor Head who also sponsors Sharapova. Murray criticized the racquet sponsor for announcing it would look to extend her contract. The Head sports equipment company remarked it was “proud to stand behind” Maria Sharapova. A statement from Head said we, now and into the future, look forward to working with her and announcing new sponsorships in the weeks and months ahead. The statement further reads that Maria has earned the benefit of the doubt and we are extending it to her and it was further said that we know that for more than a decade Maria has been a role model and a woman of great integrity.

The statement was termed by Murray as premature who said he personally would not have responded like that. Murray said he thinks it is a strange stance given everything that is happened the last few days and added he thinks at this stage it is important really to get hold of the facts and let things play out, like more information coming out before making a decision to extend the contract like that, in his view.

The Scottish professional tennis player said doping is happening on a regular basis in sports and he would not say it was shocking. Murray remarked he read that 55 athletes have failed that test since January 1 and added you do not expect high level athletes in all those sports to have heart conditions. Murray also said the high number of athletes testing positive for Meldonium since start of this year demonstrated that many athletes were getting phoney prescriptions for legal performance enhancing drugs.

Murray, who has been ranked as British No. 1 since 27 February 2006, said if you take a prescription drugs that you don't need but just because it is legal is wrong and you are just doing it for the performance-enhancing benefits.

On Tuesday, the former world number one announced she failed a drug test for Meldonium that was added to the World Anti-Doping Agency's banned list this year. Sharapova, a five-time Grand Slam champion, will not contest her guilt at the upcoming hearing of the tennis anti-doping committee. It was indicated by her lawyer that they will press for a ban much shorter than a four-year maximum period. The legal team of Maria will argue that she had been used Meldonium over 10 years for medical reasons before it was added to the WADA banned list on January 1. The legal team will pursue a "no significant fault" contingency in the World Anti-Doping Agency code.