

Meldonium factbox

Russian Olympic curling bronze medallist Alexander Krushelnitsky has left the PyeongChang Winter Games on suspicion of testing positive for the banned substance meldonium

■ **Meldonium:** The drug involved in **Alexander Krushelnitsky's** (right) doping case is readily available in Russia and some eastern European countries. It is marketed as **Mildronate** by Latvian pharmaceutical firm Grindex

■ **Banned:** Former world tennis number one **Maria Sharapova** (inset) served 15-month ban for using meldonium after it was added to World Anti-Doping Agency's prohibited list in 2016

■ **Medical use:** Meldonium was developed to treat ischemia – reduction in blood supply to body tissues. The drug aids oxygen uptake and increases endurance

■ **Military:** Meldonium was regularly given to Soviet troops in 1980s to boost stamina while fighting at high altitudes in Afghanistan

