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**EVOLIUCINĖ MEDICINA:
ŽMOGAUS RAIDOS PERSPEKTYVOS IR SVEIKATA
BESIKEIČIANČIOJE APLINKOJE**

**EVOLUTIONARY MEDICINE:
PERSPECTIVES ON HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH
CONSEQUENCES IN A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT**

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KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS OF PREGNANT WOMEN REGARDING CAFFEINE CONSUMPTION DURING PREGNANCY: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

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Background and Aim: Caffeine (1,3,7-trimethylxanthine) is one of the most used psychoactive substances worldwide. Although a daily caffeine intake of up to 400 milligrams (mg) is considered safe for healthy adults, pregnant women (PW) are advised to limit caffeine intake to 200 mg per day. This study aimed to assess PW's knowledge and awareness regarding caffeine consumption (CC) during pregnancy in Lithuania.

Materials and Methods: An anonymous online cross-sectional survey was conducted among PW in Lithuania. Socio-demographic and pregnancy-related data were collected, together with information about changes in CC before and during pregnancy, as well as participants' knowledge and awareness of CC during pregnancy. Knowledge was assessed using ten true-or-false statements developed based on recommendations from the World Health Organization, the Lithuanian Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, and the European Food Safety Authority.

Results: A total of 200 PW participated in the research. Most respondents were aware of the recommendation to limit caffeine intake throughout all stages of pregnancy. However, more than half of PW were unable to identify that a daily caffeine intake of up to 200 mg is safe for the foetus and does not impair its development. Most women also reported a lack of accessible and reliable information regarding CC during pregnancy in Lithuania.

Conclusions: PW consciously reduce caffeine intake during pregnancy; however, misconceptions and insufficient knowledge regarding the effects of caffeine on maternal and foetal health remain common. Improving education about safe CC during pregnancy may contribute to healthier maternal behaviour and foetal well-being.

Keywords: caffeine consumption, foetus, pregnancy, pregnant women