

## Understanding Real-World Concerns and Information Needs on Medication Use During Pregnancy and Lactation in Japan: A Web-Based Survey to Support Future Evidence Generation

Izumi Fujioka<sup>1</sup>, Mikako Goto<sup>1</sup>, Sachi Koinuma<sup>1</sup>, Atsuko Murashima<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>, Japan Drug Information Institute in Pregnancy,  
National Center for Child Health and Development, Tokyo, Japan.

<sup>2</sup>, Department of Rheumatology and Applied Immunology, Saitama Medical University, Saitama, Japan



### Background/Aims

**Background:** Medication use during pregnancy and lactation often raises uncertainty and concern. Although expert-based Teratology Information Services such as [the Japan Drug Information Institute in Pregnancy \(J-TIS\) in Japan](#) exist, public awareness and use remain limited.

**Aims:** To clarify Japanese mothers' concerns and information-seeking behavior regarding medication use, and to explore implications for strengthening support systems.

### Methods

- **Design:** Web-based survey (Jan. 2021)
- **Participants:** Mothers with children aged 0–3 years, recruited via parenting app (Benesse)
- **Sample size:** 601 valid responses
- **Measures:**
  - Experiences with medication use during pregnancy and lactation
  - Related concerns
  - Consultation with healthcare professionals
  - Awareness of JDIIP

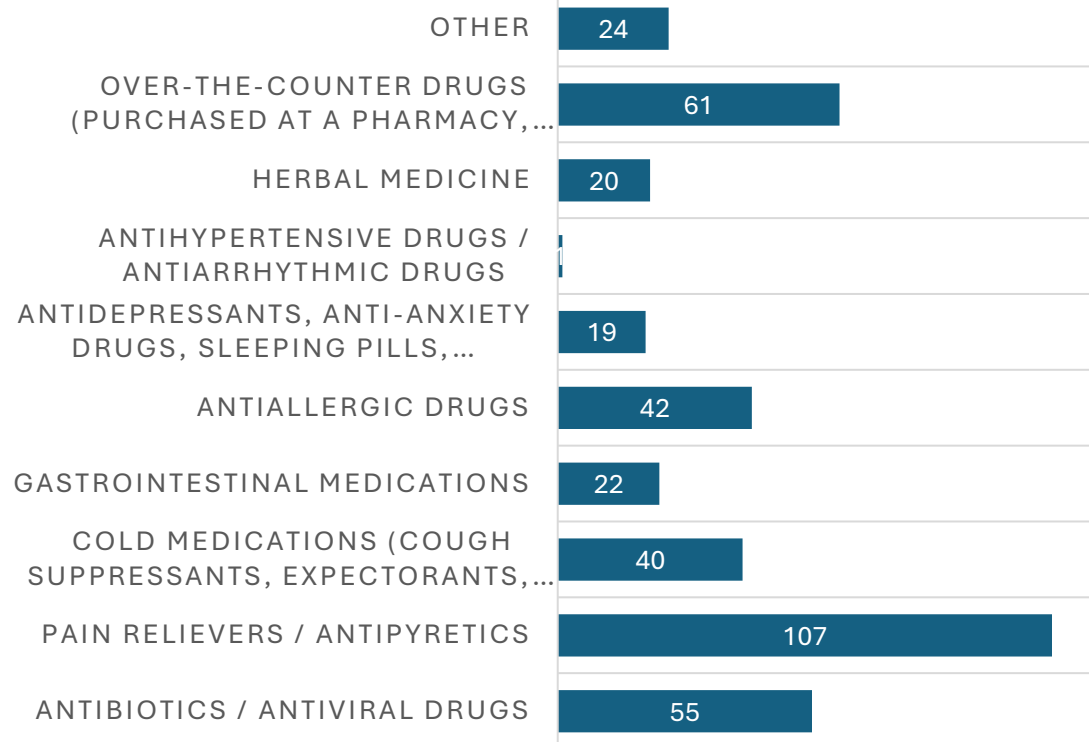
## Results

### Respondent Characteristics and Key Findings

- ✓ **601 mothers** responded to the questionnaire.
- ✓ Mean age: 34.3 years (SD 4.1)
- ✓ **38%** of respondents reported anxiety about medication use **during pregnancy**.
- ✓ **63%** of respondents reported difficulty making decisions about medication use **while breastfeeding**.
- ✓ **73%** of respondents were unaware of the Japan Drug Information Institute in Pregnancy (JDIIP).

### What women worry about (Pregnancy) ?

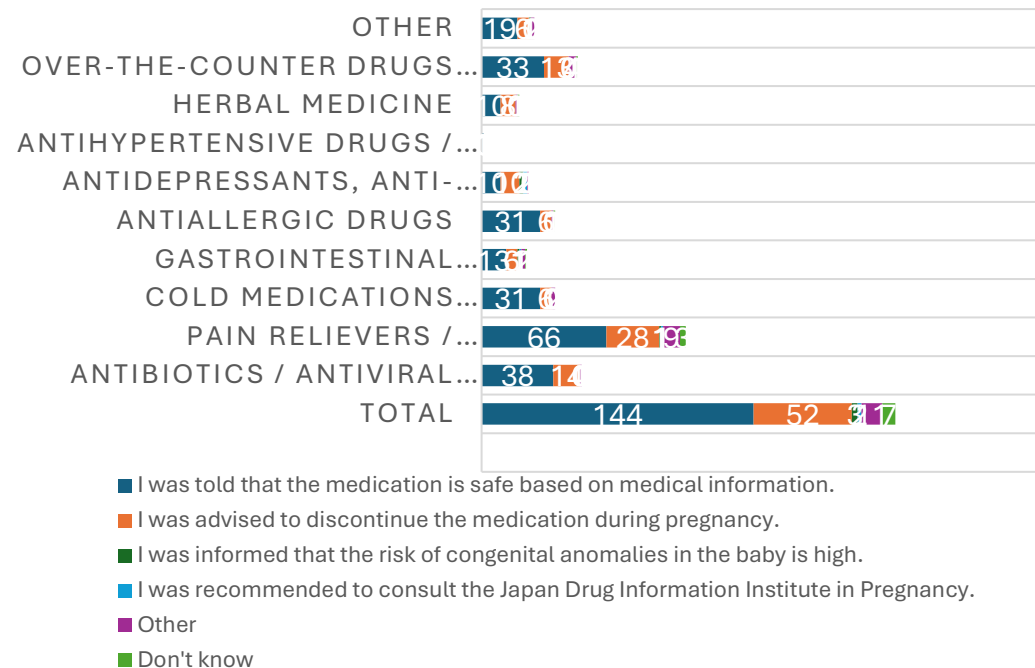
Figure 1. Medications Causing Concern During Pregnancy



Concerned respondents (n=231), multiple responses allowed (up to three per respondent). Concerns centered on **acute-condition drugs** (pain relievers, antibiotics, cold remedies); **chronic-condition drugs** were less cited, but their safety information remains essential.

## Results

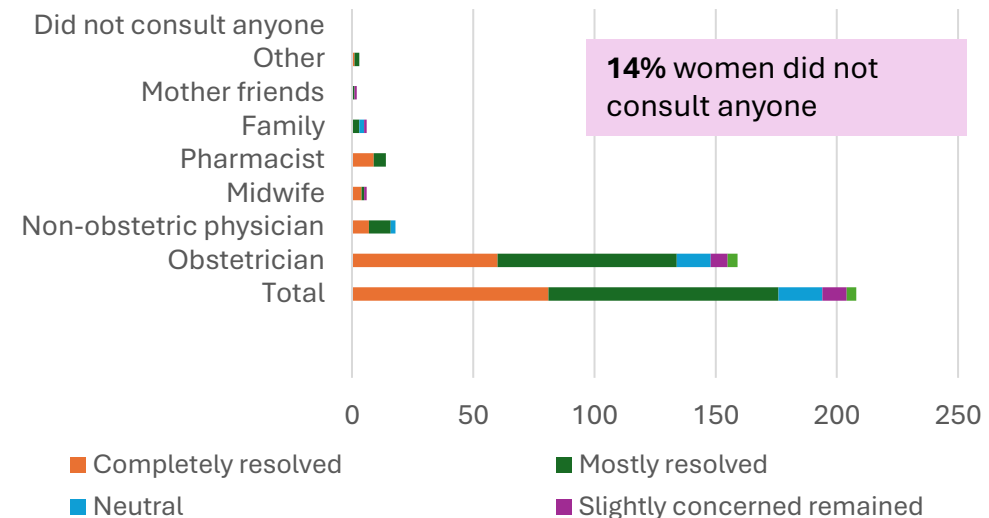
**Figure 2. Advice Received from Healthcare Providers on Medication Use in Pregnancy, by Drug Category**



Concerned respondents (n=231); up to three responses per respondent. Across categories, “safe to continue” was the predominant message; discontinuation advice also occurred, uncertainty/high-risk was noted, and referrals to JDIIP were rare.

## What they hear from Health Care Providers (Pregnancy) ?

**Figure 3. Resolution of concerns after consultation**



14% women did not consult anyone

**Resolution of concern after consultation:** indicate proportion who felt reassured vs. still concerned.

73% of mothers did not know JDIIP (TIS in Japan)

**Figure 4. Awareness of JDIIP**





## Discussion/Conclusion

- This study revealed significant concerns and unmet information needs among Japanese mothers regarding medication use in pregnancy and lactation, along with limited awareness of existing services.
- Leveraging familiar platforms such as parenting apps or social media may improve access to reliable information. Although exploratory, these findings provide a basis for strengthening support systems and guiding future approaches using real-world data.

## Conclusions

These findings highlight the importance of improving awareness and access to trusted information sources. Further discussion with international experts may help identify effective strategies to address these shared challenges.