

16. BÖLÜM

Kafein

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Kafein bir santral sinir sistemi stimülanıdır ve dünyada en sık tüketilen psi-koaktif maddedir. Kafein içeren içeceklerin, çayların tüketimi milattan önceki dönemlere dayanmaktadır. Kahve çekirdeklerinin su ile demlendirilerek tüketilmesi ise onuncu yüzyılda Etiyopya ve Yemen’de ortaya çıkmış bir alışkanlıktır ve on beşinci yüzyıl civarında Avrupa’ya yayılmıştır (1). Günümüzde, dünyada günlük kişi başı kafein tüketim ortalamasının 76 mg/gün olduğu ve İskandinav ülkeleri ile İngiltere’nin günlük yaklaşık 400 mg kafein tüketimi ile ilk sıralarda yer aldığı bildirilmektedir (2). Amerika Birleşik Devletleri (ABD)’nde ise erişkinlerin %85’inin her gün kahve tükettiği raporlanmıştır (3). Kahvenin içeriğindeki kafein ilk olarak kimyacı Friedrich Ferdinand Runge (1795–1865) tarafından ekstrakte edilmiştir. Kafeinin kimyasal yapısı ise Hermann Emil Fischer (1852-1919) tarafından ortaya konmuştur (1).

Kafeinden zengin bitkiler; kakao ve kahve çekirdekleri, çay yaprakları ve guarana meyveleridir (1). Altmıştan fazla bitki türünde kafein bulunmaktadır. Arabica kahve çekirdekleri, ağırlıklarının yaklaşık %1.1’i kadar kafein içerirken; robusta kahve çekirdeklerinin ise ağırlıklarının yaklaşık %2.2’si kadar kafein bulundurduğu raporlanmıştır. Kavrulmuş kahvedeki birim kütledeki kafein mik-

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