

**Rita Santos-Rocha** is a professor at the at the Sport Sciences School of Rio Maior (ESDRM) – Polytechnic Institute of Santarém, Portugal.

She began her professional career in the fitness industry as a gymnastics and fitness instructor, in 1989, in Portugal. After graduating in Sport Sciences and MSc in Exercise & Health, with the Faculty of Human Kinetics (FMH) – Technical University of Lisbon, she became a professor at the Sport Sciences School of Rio Maior (ESDRM) – Polytechnic Institute of Santarém ([www.esdrm.pt](http://www.esdrm.pt)). In 2006, she obtained a PhD in Human Movement, specializing in Health & Fitness (FMH) and since 2007, she has been a researcher of the Neuromechanics of Human Movement group of the Interdisciplinary Centre for the Study of Human Performance (CIPER) of FMH, where she is involved in several research projects.

Subjects: Exercise Testing & Prescription, Public Health & Physical Activity, and Research Methods in Sports, with emphasis on Exercise in Pregnancy & Postpartum.

YouTube channels:

ACTIVE AT HOME (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEUWdoBeh5rgfM0kZOn9Xtg>)

ACTIVE PREGNANCY

(<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0Vyookwc0mcQ5T70imtoNA/about>).

Main research interests: Planning and analysing the effects of exercise programmes on health, lifestyle, fitness, and gait parameters of pregnant and postpartum women, and other populations. Rita also is Vice-President of the Portuguese Association of Exercise Physiologists ([www.apfe.pt](http://www.apfe.pt)). Member of the Professional Standards Committee of EuropeActive (2010-2020), and she was involved in most of the Technical Expert Groups of the EuropeActive's Educational Standards for the Fitness Sector. She was also involved in the international educational NEPPE project: The New Era of Pregnancy and Postpartum Exercise (2021-2023, Poland).

Her scientific achievements are presented here:

<http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7188-8383>

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Rita\\_Santos-Rocha](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Rita_Santos-Rocha)

Participation in the following projects funded by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology FCT ([www.fct.mctes.pt](http://www.fct.mctes.pt)), Portugal:

POCTI/DES/61761/2004 (PhD student) - Evaluation of biomechanical load on the musculo-skeletal system. Development and application of experimental and modelling methodologies (funded);

PTDC/DES/72946/2006 (researcher) - Biomechanics of Locomotion in Elderly People. Relevant Variables for Risk of Fracture Reduction (funded);

PTDC/DES/102058/2008 (principal researcher) - Effect of biomechanical loading on the musculoskeletal system in women during pregnancy and the postpartum period (funded);

PTDC/DES/103178/2008 (researcher) - Development of “in vivo” experimental techniques and modelling methodologies for the evaluation of the mechanical load applied on the musculoskeletal system (funded);

PTDC/DES/115355/2009 (researcher) - Biomechanical load on the musculoskeletal system in overweight and obese adolescents. The effect of morphology, physical activity, maturity and external loads carrying (not funded);

PTDC/DES/117031/2010 (principal researcher) - Follow up study on the morphology and gait changes during pregnancy and postpartum, and effect of physical exercise (not funded);

EXPL/DTP-DES/0561/2012 (principal researcher) - ACTIVE PREGNANCY: Effect of physical exercise programs on gait biomechanics, functionality, morphology and low back pain, in woman, during pregnancy and post-partum;

EXPL/DTP-DES/1850/2013 (principal researcher) - ACTIVE PREGNANCY: Pattern of gait during an active pregnancy and with pregnancy-related pelvic or low back pain, using plantar pressure data (not funded);

POCI-01-0145-FEDER-023423 (researcher) - 2Bio4cartilage: Integrated intervention program for prevention and treatment of cartilage lesions (funded; work in progress);

POCI-01-0145-FEDER-023822 (researcher) - MIND&GAIT: Promoting independent living in frail older adults by improving cognition and gait ability and using assistive products (funded; work in progress);

POCI-01-0145-FEDER-023557 (researcher) – TEENPOWER: E-empowering teenagers to prevent obesity (funded; work in progress);

FCT 02/SAICT/2017 (principal researcher) - ACTIVE SCHOOL - Implementation of an exercise program for children. Effects on the physical activity pattern, biomechanical loading, morphology, and motor competence (not funded).

Participation in the following projects funded by QREN - Programa Operacional do Alentejo 2007-2013 ([www.qren.pt](http://www.qren.pt)):

ALENT-07-0262-FEDER-001883-IPS-ESDRM-ESSS-LIDS (principal researcher) - Parque de Ciência e Tecnologia do Alentejo - Laboratório de Investigação em Desporto e Saúde - Unidade de Promoção da Atividade Física e Saúde (Sport and Health Research Laboratory – Promotion of Physical Activity and Health).

Participation in Erasmus+ actions: 557067 - EPP - 1 - 2014 - 1 - NL - SPO – SCP (researcher) SEDY - Sports Empowers Disabled Youth. Promotor: University of Amsterdam (funded 2015/18). 613130-EPP-1-2019-1-NL-SPO-SCP (researcher) SEDY2 - Sport Empowers Disabled Youth 2 (funded 2019); 2019-1-PT01-KA203-061389 (researcher) Train4Health - Improving Healthcare Students' Competences for Behaviour to Effectively Support Self-care in Chronic Diseases (Escola Superior de Enfermagem de Lisboa).

Participation in projects funded by non-research entities: IPDJ – Instituto Português do Desporto e da Juventude - Programa Nacional de Desporto para Todos – PNDpT, 2015-2016: CP/143/DD/2015 (principal researcher): ESCOLA ATIVA [ACTIVE SCHOOL] – Promoção de Atividade Física e Desportiva em Contexto Escolar (funded). 2017: CP/453/DD/2017 (principal researcher): ESCOLA ATIVA [ACTIVE SCHOOL] – Promoção de Atividade Física e Desportiva em Contexto Escolar (funded). CP/704/DDT/2019 and CP/536/DDT/2020 and CP/216/DDT/2022 -(principal researcher): GRAVIDEZ ATIVA - Promoção da Atividade Física, Exercício e Desporto na Gravidez e Pós-parto (both funded).