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Effects of Vitamin D on health promotion in pregnancy and its impact on prematurity-related outcome indicators in the Alentejo region**Olivia Barbosa***University of Évora, Portugal*

The lack of epidemiological data on the prevalence of vitamin D deficiency in pregnant women in Portugal and the existence of genetic polymorphisms in the Portuguese population motivated the conception of the VitDTracking Project. This PhD Project entitled "Effects of Vitamin D on Health Promotion in Pregnancy and its Impact on Prematurity-Related Outcome Indicators in the Alentejo Region", emerged within the scope of the Health Sciences and Well-being Technologies course, in association with the University of Évora, NOVA University Lisbon and the National School of Public Health. The focus of the research is the relevance of vitamin D levels during pregnancy and their association with prematurity, with the aim of improving maternal and child health outcomes, particularly in reducing avoidable preterm births.

Prematurity (birth before 37 completed weeks of gestation) constitutes an urgent public health problem globally, accounting for 15 million annual births. It has a prevalence of approximately 10% of births worldwide, with a rising trend in the rate of extreme prematurity (less than 28 weeks of gestational age) in the Alentejo region. Due to recurrent complications of this condition, prematurity as a cause of neonatal and infant morbidity and mortality is considered a general indicator of the health level, quality of life, and overall development of the population in several countries.

The results of the studies will be decisive for the creation of strategies in the prevention and treatment of this condition in pregnant women, contributing to innovative practices in prenatal and postnatal surveillance in Portugal, particularly in reducing avoidable preterm births. It may also improve other health indicators and long-term quality of life by integrating cost-benefit analysis, which is the basis for creating new public health policies.

Biography

Olivia Barbosa is a distinguished researcher and academic at the University of Évora, Portugal. With a focus on biochemistry and enzymology, her work encompasses the study and application of enzymes in industrial and environmental contexts. Passionate about innovation, Olivia contributes to advancing sustainable solutions and has been actively involved in various research projects aimed at enhancing biocatalysis efficiency. Her academic dedication and scientific achievements underscore her significant role in the field of biotechnology.