

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

NAME: Mena, Pedro

POSITION TITLE: Associate Professor of Human Nutrition, University of Parma

EDUCATION/TRAINING

INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE	Completion Date	FIELD OF STUDY
University Miguel Hernández, Elche, Spain	M.Sc.	11/2008	Agronomical Engineering
Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology, University Miguel Hernández, Elche, Spain	Ph.D	06/2013	Molecular and Cell Biology

A. Personal Statement

Dr. Pedro Mena is an Associate Professor in human nutrition at the University of Parma, Italy. His line of research is related to the bioavailability and biological activity of plant bioactives in human, animal, and cell models, with a particular focus on (poly)phenolic compounds and inter-individual variability. Pedro is also devoted to the development and use of realistic experimental models, trying to make science more robust and translatable.

Dr. Mena has secured international (ERC Starting Grant PREDICT-CARE, EIC Pathfinder in Precision Nutrition), national (FARE Excellence project), and private funding (Lavazza, Indena, International Fruit and Vegetable Juice Association, etc.) as Principal Investigator, and served as a consultant for Soremartec (Ferrero group) and Procter & Gamble. He has also participated actively in several excellent international consortiums: H2020 PREVENTOMICS, JPI HDHL FoodPhyt and VALID, PRIMA MED4Youth and SaffronFood, and the COST Action POSITIVE. Dr. Mena has published >190 papers in peer reviewed ISI journals, has >100 contributions to international conferences, >20 invited presentations at major international conferences, 8 book chapters, and 4 granted patents. He is a Senior Editorial Board Member for Scientific Reports and member of the editorial boards of Nutrients, Microbiota Research Reports, and Aspects of Molecular Medicine, among other journals. He was also co-chair of the 3rd International Conference on Food Bioactives and Health (>400 delegates, Parma, June 2022). He has also evaluated scientific proposals for different bodies (Polish National Science Centre, Spanish State Research Agency, Italian Ministry for Universities and Research, Qatar National Research Fund, Flanders Research Foundation -Belgium-, etc.), serving as panel member for some of these evaluation bodies.

His passion for innovation leads to merging as many competencies as possible to solve complex nutritional problems. The niche that the Human Nutrition Unit of the University of Parma represents has brought his group to a unique position. He has been able to create a multidisciplinary, quite international, competent group, with expertise in different omics disciplines, food DBs, nutritional interventions, and advanced modelling. The group includes currently 6 junior and senior Postdocs, 10 PhD students, 3 Research Fellows and an average of 14 Master Students. The PhD students (3) and postdocs (3) that he has supervised are securing positions in academia, and the number of visiting foreign PhDs has increased notably (13) in the last 5 years.

Ongoing and recently completed projects that I would like to highlight include:

- 2024 – 2028 Addressing malnutrition and metabolic health in non-communicable diseases through precision nutrition: impact in quality of life and prognosis of lung cancer patients (MENTORING). *European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA), HORIZON-EIC-2023-PATHFINDERCHALLENGES-01*. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR at UNIPR. 1,049,437.50 € (out of 4,031,666.25).
- 2023 – 2023 Characterization of the (poly)phenolic components in Verbascum extracts. Perfect Srl (Italy). PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR. 13,000 €.

- 2022 – 2026 CARDIOMETABOLIC RESPONSE to plant-based DIETs at individual level: deciphering the complexity of plant bioactives (CARE-DIET). *FARE (Research Excellence Project of the Italian Ministry of Education)*. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR. 461,363 €.
- 2022 – 2025 Research and innovation network on food and nutrition. Sustainability, Safety and Security – Working ON Foods (ON FOODS). *Italian PNRR Mission 4: Education and Research, Component 2: From Research to Enterprise, Investment 1.3 - Partnerships extended to universities, research centres, enterprises and research project funding*. UNIT PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR, WP LEADER. 420,000 € (out of 114,5 M€).
- 2021 – 2025 Developing tools for the prediction, at individual level, of the cardiometabolic response to the consumption of dietary (poly)phenols (PREDICT-CARE). *ERC Starting Grant 2020*. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR. 2,309,518 €.
- 2021 – 2021 Contribution to a publication on the health effects of 100% fruit juices. IFU, International Fruit and Vegetable Juice Association (France). PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR. 6,000 €.
- 2020 – 2021 Evaluation of the colonic catabolism of food products containing cannabidiol (CBD) and cannabidiolic acid (CBDA) using a human fermentation model. Indena SpA (Italy). PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR. 15,737 €.
- 2020 – 2020 Risk assessment for novel food Cascara. Lavazza SpA (Italy). CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR. 35,000 €.
- 2020 – 2020 Evaluation of the phytochemical composition of coffee samples. Lavazza SpA (Italy). PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR. 13,800 €.
- 2019 – 2020 Evaluation of the colonic catabolism of extracts containing CoQ10 and quercetin using a human fermentation model. Indena SpA (Italy). PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR. 14,941 €.
- 2019 – 2019 Literature review and study of the feasibility of a health claim for EFSA. Lavazza SpA (Italy). PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR. 5,000 k€.
- 2018 – 2019 Analysis of samples collected in prior cranberry and health studies: biomarkers for flavan-3-ol intake. Cranberry Institute (USA). CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR. 88,500 €.
- 2018 The Nutraceutical, Cosmetic, and Animal Nutrition Market of Hazelnut Polyphenols. Soremartec Italia S.r.l. (Ferrero group, Italy). PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (CONSULTANT). 4,000 €.

B. Positions, Scientific Appointments, and Honors

CURRENT POSITION

- 2021 – Associate Professor. Human Nutrition Unit, Dept. of Food and Drugs, University of Parma, Parma, Italy.

PREVIOUS POSITIONS

- 2019 – 2021 Assistant Professor (RTDb). Human Nutrition Unit, Dept. of Food and Drugs, University of Parma, Parma, Italy.
- 2019 – 2019 Assistant Professor (RTDa). Human Nutrition Unit, Dept. of Veterinary Science, University of Parma, Parma, Italy.
- 2016 – 2019 Senior Research Fellow. Human Nutrition Unit, Dept. of Food & Drugs, University of Parma, Parma, Italy.
- 2013 – 2016 Postdoctoral Fellow. Human Nutrition Unit, Dept. of Food Science, Univ. of Parma, Italy.
- 2009 – 2013 Predoctoral Fellow. CEBAS-CSIC, Food Sci. & Technol. Dept., Murcia, Spain.
- 2007 – 2009 Intern. U. Miguel Hernández, Agri-Food Technology Dept. Orihuela, Alicante, Spain.
- 2008 – 2008 Work experience placement. Mitra Sol Technologies S.L., Murcia, Spain.
- 2007 – 2008 Project fellow. U. Miguel Hernández, Agri-Food Technology Dept., Alicante, Spain.
- 2007 – 2007 Research fellow. CEBAS-CSIC, Food Sci. & Technol. Dept., Murcia, Spain.
- 2007 – 2007 Project fellow. U. Miguel Hernández, Agri-Food Technology Dept., Alicante, Spain.

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

- 2019 Travel Award for the FENS 2019 – 13th European Nutrition Conference. Italian Society of Human Nutrition (SINU). Dublin, Ireland.
- 2014 – 2016 Postdoctoral Fellow of the Fundación Séneca (competitive call). Murcia Region, Spain.
- 2009 – 2013 Predoctoral Fellow of the FPU Fellowship Programme (competitive call). Spanish Ministry of

- Education. Spain.
- 2013 Travel Award. 6th International Conf. on Polyphenols & Health. Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- 2012 Travel Award. 26th International Conference on Polyphenols. Florence, Italy.
- 2011 First Excellence National Prize of M.Sc. in Agronomical Engineer for the Academic Period 2008-2009 by the Ministry of Education. Spain.
- 2010 "Five Star" Prize by the University Miguel Hernández. Spain.
- 2009 First Extraordinary Prize of M.Sc. in Agronomical Engineer for the Academic Period 2008-2009 by the University Miguel Hernández. Spain.
- 2007 – 2007 Undergraduate Fellow for research training (competitive call). CSIC. Spain.

C. Contributions to Science

Cardiometabolic effects of plant bioactives or foods containing them, considering individual variability

1. Martini, D., Rosi, A., Tassotti, M., Antonini, M., Dall'Asta, M., Bresciani, L., Fantuzzi, F., Spigoni, V., Domínguez-Perles, R., Angelino, D., Ricci, C., Del Pozo-Luengo, S., Tornel, P. L., Scazzina, F., Gil-Izquierdo, A., Dei Cas, A., Brighenti, F., Bonadonna, R., Del Rio, D.,* & **Mena, P.** (2021). Effect of coffee and cocoa-based confectionery containing coffee on markers of cardiometabolic health: results from the pocket-4-life project. *European Journal of Nutrition*, 60(3), 1453-1463.
2. Martini, D., Chiavaroli, L., González-Sarrías, A., Bresciani, L., Palma-Duran, S. A., Dall'Asta, M., Deligiannidou, G.-E., Massaro, M., Scoditti, E., Combet, E., Maksimova, V., Urpi-Sarda, M., Kontogiorgis, C. A., Andrés-Lacueva, C., Gibney, E. R., Del Rio, D., Morand, C., Garcia-Aloy, M., Rodriguez-Mateos, A., & **Mena, P.*** (2019). Impact of Foods and Dietary Supplements Containing Hydroxycinnamic Acids on Cardiometabolic Biomarkers: A Systematic Review to Explore Inter-Individual Variability. *Nutrients*, 11(8), 1805.

Bioavailability and metabolism of (poly)phenolic compounds, considering individual variability

3. Favari, C.,** Rinaldi de Alvarenga, J. F.,# Sánchez-Martínez, L., Tosi, N., Mignogna, C., Cremonini, E., Manach, C., Bresciani, L., Del Rio, D., & **Mena, P.** (2024). Factors driving the inter-individual variability in the metabolism and bioavailability of (poly)phenolic metabolites: A systematic review of human studies. *Redox Biology*, 71, 103095.
4. **Mena, P.,**** Bresciani, L.,# Tassotti, M.,# Rosi, A., Martini, D., Antonini, M., Cas, A. D., Bonadonna, R., Brighenti, F., & Del Rio, D. (2021). Effect of different patterns of consumption of coffee and a cocoa-based product containing coffee on the nutrkinetics and urinary excretion of phenolic compounds. *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 114(6), 2107-2118.

Metabotyping: clustering individual variability to allow personalised nutrition strategies

5. Tosi, N., Favari, C., Bresciani, L., Flanagan, E., Hornberger, M., Narbad, A., Del Rio, D.,* Vauzour, D.,* & **Mena, P.** (2023). Unravelling phenolic metabolotypes in the frame of the COMBAT study, a randomized, controlled trial with cranberry supplementation. *Food Research International*, 172, 113187.
6. **Mena, P.,**** Favari, C.,# Acharjee, A., Chernbumroong, S., Bresciani, L., Curti, C., Brighenti, F., Heiss, C., Rodriguez-Mateos, A., & Del Rio, D. (2022). Metabotypes of flavan-3-ol colonic metabolites after cranberry intake: elucidation and statistical approaches. *European Journal of Nutrition*, 61(3), 1299-1317.

Life beyond (poly)phenols, as they co-occur with other plant bioactives impacting cardiometabolic health

7. Costa-Pérez, A., Núñez-Gómez, V., Baenas, N.,* Di Pede, G., Achour, M., Manach, C., **Mena, P.**, Del Rio, D., García-Viguera, C., Moreno, D. A.,* & Domínguez-Perles, R. (2023). Systematic Review on the Metabolic Interest of Glucosinolates and Their Bioactive Derivatives for Human Health. *Nutrients*, 15(6), 1424.
8. Bresciani, L., Tassotti, M., Rosi, A., Martini, D., Antonini, M., Dei Cas, A., Bonadonna, R., Brighenti, F., Del Rio, D.,* & **Mena, P.** (2020). Absorption, Pharmacokinetics, and Urinary Excretion of Pyridines After Consumption of Coffee and Cocoa-Based Products Containing Coffee in a Repeated Dose, Crossover Human Intervention Study. *Molecular Nutrition & Food Research*, 64(18), 2000489.

Multi-modal data: from dietary assessment in large cohorts to multi-omics studies on plant bioactives

9. Ziauddeen, N.,[#] Rosi, A.[#], Del Rio, D.,^{*} Amoutzopoulos, B., Nicholson, S., Page, P., Scazzina, F., Brighenti, F., Ray, S.,^{*} & **Mena, P.** (2019). Dietary intake of (poly)phenols in children and adults: cross-sectional analysis of UK National Diet and Nutrition Survey Rolling Programme (2008–2014). *European Journal of Nutrition*, 58(8), 3183-3198.
10. Bayram, B., González-Sarriás, A., Istas, G., Garcia-Aloy, M., Morand, C., Tuohy, K., García-Villalba, R.,^{*} & **Mena, P.**^{*} (2018). Breakthroughs in the Health Effects of Plant Food Bioactives: A Perspective on Microbiomics, Nutri(epi)genomics, and Metabolomics. *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, 66(41), 10686-10692.

Complete List of Published Work in Scopus:

<https://www.scopus.com/authid/detail.uri?authorId=39863361900>

Peer-reviewed publications (30-01-2026): 191. *h*-index: 53, Scopus; 61, Google Scholar. Total citations: 8,964, Scopus; 12,016, Google Scholar.

Book chapters: 8.