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Heart Rate Variability Alterations in Late Life Depression: A
Meta-analysis

Lydia Brown , Chandan Karmakar , Richard Grey , Ripu Jindal ,
Terrence Lim , Christina Bryant

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Highlights

- Heart rate variability (HRV) is a physiological mechanism that may help explain the link between depression and heart disease, but no meta-analysis has yet examined HRV alterations in depressed older adults.
- This meta-analysis demonstrates that HRV is reduced among depressed older adults, and this finding cannot be fully explained by antidepressant use.
- Specifically, low frequency HRV may be reduced among depressed older adults
- Future research should aim to examine exactly how and why HRV is reduced in later life depression, and consider trialing interventions designed to increase HRV.

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