

Table DS1 Characteristics of the 11 included studies

Study	Assessment instrument, criterion	Population	Sample size, <i>n</i>			Age, years						Exclusion criteria	HAM-D score: mean (s.d.)			Q ^a	
						Mean age			Cut-off age	Mean age at onset			EL	LL	All		
			EL	LL	All	EL	LL	All									
Brown <i>et al</i> (1984) ¹⁸	SADS, RDC	IP	28	63	91	39	64		50	34	60	Bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, secondary depression	32.0 (7.5)	31.3 (7.8)		7	
Small <i>et al</i> (1986) ¹⁹	NR, DSM-III	OP	38	39	77	35	67		55			Psychosis, actively suicidal	22.1 (5.0)	22.7 (6.1)		4	
Brody <i>et al</i> (1991) ¹⁷	Semi-structured interview, DSM-III	IP/OP	181	61	242	37	69		60			Primary diagnosis of alcohol or drug misuse, not fluent in English, insufficient cognition	18.8 (7.6)	21.2 (9.6)		5	
Koenig <i>et al</i> (1993) ²¹	DIS, RDC	Medical IP	26	44	70				<40, 70+ ^b			NR				5	
Wallace & Pfohl (1995) ²³	Structured interview, DSM-III	IP			257			39				Medical condition that might invalidate dexamethasone suppression test				5	
Brody <i>et al</i> (1997) ¹⁴	Structured interview, DSM-III-R	IP/OP	208	77	285	38	69		60			Bipolar disorder, depression secondary to organic disorder, diagnosis other than major depression episode	20.8 (6.5)	25.2 (7.1)		5	
Stage <i>et al</i> (2001) ²²	Structured interview, DSM-III/III-R/IV	IP	228	233	461			55	55			Other mental or neurological disorders, acute infections, pregnancy, severe systemic diseases			23.1 (4.4)	6	
Tan <i>et al</i> (2001) ²⁰	Structured interview, DSM-IV	IP/OP	28	42	70	38	73		60	35	69	Neurological disorder, dementia, mute	23.8 (5.2)	26.5 (6.3)		8	
Brody <i>et al</i> (2005) ¹⁵	Structured interview, DSM-III-R/IV	IP/OP	242	40	282				60			Depression secondary to physical illness or substance misuse	19.1 (6.5)	22.2 (8.0)		5	
Shahpesandy (2005) ¹⁶	NR, ICD-10	NR	60	46	106	45	71		65			Not reported				1	
Gournellis <i>et al</i> (2011) ¹³	SCID-IV, DSM-IV	IP	30	69	99	45	70		60	45	56	MMSE score <23, depression secondary to somatic condition, non-psychotic depression	29.3 (5.7)	30.3 (6.0)		8	
All studies					2011												

DIS, Diagnostic Interview Schedule; EL, early-life depression; HAM-D, Hamilton Rating Scale for Depression; IP, in-patient; LL, late-life depression, MMSE, Mini-Mental State Examination; NR, not reported; OP, out-patient; RDC, Research Diagnostic Criteria; SADS, Schedule for Affective Disorders and Schizophrenia; SCID-IV, Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV Axis I Disorders.

a. Quality assessment score.

b. Participants were aged <40 or >70 years.