

PLASMA BIOSIGNATURE AND BRAIN METABOLIC FINGERPRINT IN MAJOR DEPRESSION DISORDER

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of

Master of Science in Bioinformatics and Data Science

BY

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SATHYABAMA
INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)

Accredited with Grade “A++” by NAAC | 12B Status by UGC | Approved by AICTE

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BONAFIDE CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that this Project Report is to bonafide work of **VENKADESH PRASAD S (42739028)** who carried out the final year project entitled "**PLASMA BIOSIGNATURE AND BRAIN METABOLIC FINGERPRINT IN MAJOR DEPRESSION DISORDER**" under our supervision from September 2023 to May 2024.

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Internal Examiner

External Examiner

DECLARATION

I, **S. VENKADESH PRASAD (42739028)**, hereby declare that the Project Report entitled “**PLASMA BIOSIGNATURE AND BRAIN METABOLIC FINGERPRINT IN MAJOR DEPRESSION DISORDER**” done by me under the guidance of **Dr. DANIEL ALEX ANAND** is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of **Master of Science in Bioinformatics and Data Science**.

DATE:

PLACE:

SIGNATURE OF THE CANDIDATE

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ABSTRACT

Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) is a prevalent psychiatric condition characterized by persistent low mood, diminished interest or pleasure in activities, and a range of cognitive and physiological symptoms. While the exact etiology of MDD remains elusive, there is growing evidence suggesting dysregulation in both peripheral and central biological markers. This study aims to investigate the potential plasma biosignature and brain metabolic fingerprint associated with MDD. Utilizing advanced neuroimaging techniques such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) and positron emission tomography (PET), alongside comprehensive plasma biomarker analysis, we aim to delineate the underlying neurobiological mechanisms of MDD. By identifying distinctive patterns in plasma biomarkers and brain metabolism, we seek to enhance our understanding of MDD pathophysiology, potentially paving the way for more targeted diagnostic and therapeutic interventions. Through a multi-modal approach combining clinical assessments, neuroimaging, and plasma biomarker analysis, this study aims to elucidate the intricate interplay between peripheral markers and central neurobiology in MDD. The findings from this research endeavor hold promise for the development of novel diagnostic tools, personalized treatment strategies, and biomarker-driven interventions in the management of MDD. Ultimately, the insights gained from this study may not only enhance our understanding of MDD pathophysiology but also inform the development of more precise diagnostic tools and targeted interventions.

Keywords: *Neuroimaging, Functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), Positron emission tomography (PET), Biomarkers, Pathophysiology, Treatment response, Diagnostic tools*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER NO	TITLE	PAGE NO
	ABSTRACT	i
	LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	ii
	LIST OF TABLES	ii
	LIST OF FIGURES	ii
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	1.1 PLASMA BIOSIGNATURE	2
	1.2 BRAIN METABOLIC FINGERPRINT	4
2	REVIEW OF LITERATURE	6
3	AIM AND SCOPE OF STUDY	9
	3.1 AIM	9
	3.2 SCOPE OF STUDY	9
	3.2.1 IDENTIFICATION OF BIOMARKERS	9
	3.2.2 CORRELATION STUDIES	9
	3.2.3 CLINICAL RELEVANCE	10
4	METHODOLOGY	11
	4.1 BIOLOGICAL BASIS OF DEPRESSION	11
	4.1.1 NEUROTRANSMITTER DYSREGULATION	11
	4.1.2 NEUROENDOCRINE ABNORMALITIES	11
	4.1.3 NEUROINFLAMMATION	11
	4.1.4 GENETIC FACTORS:	12
	4.1.5 NEUROPLASTICITY AND BRAIN STRUCTURE	12
	4.1.6 EPIGENETIC MODIFICATIONS	12
	4.1.7 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS	12
	4.2 PLASMA BIOSIGNATURE IN MDD	13

	4.2.1 DEFINITION	13
	4.2.2 BIOMARKER DISCOVERY	13
	4.2.3 CANDIDATE BIOMARKERS	14
	4.3 BRAIN METABOLIC IN MDD	17
	4.3.1 METABOLIC PATHWAYS	17
	4.3.2 BIOMARKERS	17
	4.3.3 TREATMENT RESPONSE	17
	4.3.4 INTEGRATED ANALYSIS	17
	4.3.5 CORRELATION WITH CLINICAL FEATURES	18
	4.4 PYTHON IN BIOINFORMATICS	19
	4.4.1 BIOLOGICAL SEQUENCE ANALYSIS	19
	4.4.2 GENOMIC DATA ANALYSIS	19
	4.4.3 VISUALIZATION	20
	4.5 HUMAN METABOLOME DATABASE (HMDB):	20
	4.6 INTEGRATION OF PLASMA BIOSIGNATURES AND BRAIN METABOLIC FINGERPRINT MDD:	21
	4.7 WORKFLOW:	19
	4.7.1 IDENTIFY GROUP LABELS	25
	4.7.2 DATA CLEANING AND PREPROCESSING	25
	4.7.3 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS	25
	4.7.4 CORRELATION ANALYSIS	26
	4.7.5 DATA VISUALIZATION	26
	4.7.6 INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS	26
5	RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	28
	5.1 DATA VISUALIZATION:	28
	5.2 RESULT AND INTERPRETATION	30
	5.2.1 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS RESULTS	30
	5.2.2 DATA VISUALIZATION:	30
	5.2.3 INTERPRETATION	30

	5.3 CORRELATION ANALYSIS	31
	5.4 RESULT AND INTERPRETATION	33
	5.4.1 CORRELATION ANALYSIS RESULTS	33
	5.4.2 DATA VISUALIZATION	33
	5.4.3 INTERPRETATION	34
	5.5 KEY FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS	48
	5.5.1 METABOLIC PATHWAY INVOLVEMENT	48
	5.5.2 DIFFERENTIAL METABOLITES	48
	5.5.3 NOVEL INSIGHTS FROM METABOLOMIC ANALYSIS	48
	5.5.4 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS STRENGTHS	49
	5.6 IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH AND THERAPY	49
	5.7 KEY INSIGHTS FROM STUDY II FILES ON MDD	55
	5.7.1 ALTERED METABOLIC PATHWAYS AND METABOLITES	55
	5.7.2 INFLUENCE OF ANTIDEPRESSANT TREATMENT	55
	5.7.3 POTENTIAL BIOMARKERS FOR MDD	56
	5.7.4 IMPACT OF AGE AND ANALYTICAL TECHNIQUES	56
	5.7.5 COMPREHENSIVE META-ANALYSIS	56
	5.7.6 DIFFERENTIAL IMPACTS BASED ON BIOLOGICAL SAMPLES	56
6	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	59
	6.1 SUMMARY	59
	6.2 CONCLUSION	59
	REFERENCES	60

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- ALEX: Automated liner exchange, by Gerstel corporation.
- CIS: Cold injection system, by Gerstel corporation.
- GC: Gas chromatography.
- TOF MS: Time of flight mass spectrometry.
- QC: Quality control.
- IS: Internal standards.
- FAME: Fatty acid methyl esters.
- InChI: International Chemical Identifier key.
- KEGG: Kyoto Encyclopedia of Genes and Genomes.
- PubChem: A public database of chemicals and chemical information.
- rt: Retention time (seconds).
- RI: Retention index.
- m/z (m/z): Mass-to-charge ratio.
- s/n: Signal to noise ratios.
- PCA: Principal Component Analysis.
- Annotation: Describes the metabolite or substance identified.
- Ret. Index (Retention Index): A numerical value indicating the retention time of a compound in gas chromatography, which helps in its identification.

	LIST OF TABLES	
TABLE NO	TITLE	PAGE NO
1	DEMOGRAPHIC AND CLINICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS	34
2	LIST OF ENDOGENOUS METABOLITES (1)	35
3	LIST OF ENDOGENOUS METABOLITES (2)	39
4	DIFFERENTIAL METABOLIC PATHWAYS ENRICHED FROM DIFFERENT GROUPS	44
5	DIFFERENTIAL METABOLITES HIT IN DIFFERENTIAL PATHWAYS	46
6	DEMOGRAPHIC AND CLINICAL CHARACTERISTICS	57
7	DIFFERENTIAL METABOLITES	57
8	ENRICHED METABOLIC PATHWAYS	58
9	METABOLOMICS RESEARCH EXTENSIONS	58

	LIST OF FIGURES	
FIGURES NO	TITLE	PAGE NO
1	HUMAN PLASMA PRIMARY METABOLITES (1)	16
2	HUMAN PLASMA PRIMARY METABOLITES (2)	16
3	WORKFLOW	34
4	SENSITIVITY ANALYSES ACCORDING TO ANALYTIC TECHNIQUES	50
5	META REGENERATION ANALYSES OF METABOLITES IN THE BLOOD	52
6	ALTERED METABOLIC PATHWAYS IN THE BLOOD OF PATIENTS WITH MDD	53
7	SIGNIFICANTLY ALTERED CANONICAL PATHWAYS IN THE BLOOD OF PATIENTS WITH MDD	54

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) stands as one of the most prevalent and debilitating psychiatric illnesses worldwide, presenting a significant burden on individuals, families, and society. Characterized by persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and anhedonia, MDD not only affects mood but also disrupts various aspects of cognitive, emotional, and physiological functioning. Despite decades of research and clinical advancements, the underlying mechanisms driving MDD remain incompletely understood, presenting a formidable challenge for effective diagnosis and treatment.

At the forefront of this endeavour are plasma biosignatures and brain metabolic fingerprints—two distinct yet complementary approaches that offer insight into the underlying neurobiology of MDD. Plasma biosignatures encompass a diverse array of molecules, including proteins, metabolites, hormones, and genetic markers, circulating in the bloodstream. These biomarkers provide a window into the systemic alterations associated with MDD, reflecting processes such as inflammation, neuroendocrine dysregulation, and oxidative stress. (National Academies of Sciences 2023)

Simultaneously, brain metabolic fingerprinting delves into the intricate metabolic landscape of the brain, utilizing advanced neuroimaging techniques such as positron emission tomography (PET) and magnetic resonance spectroscopy (MRS) to assess metabolic activity and neurotransmitter levels within specific brain regions implicated in depression. By uncovering metabolic abnormalities, neurotransmitter imbalances, and neuroinflammatory markers, brain metabolic fingerprinting offers invaluable insights into the neural circuitry underlying MDD. (Zhong et al 2024)

1.1 PLASMA BIOSIGNATURE

The integration of plasma biosignatures and brain metabolic fingerprints represents a synergistic approach to unraveling the complex pathophysiology of MDD. By correlating molecular alterations in the peripheral circulation with metabolic changes within the brain, researchers seek to elucidate novel biomarker panels that enhance diagnostic accuracy, predict treatment response, and guide personalized therapeutic interventions. (Pierce 2017)

There has been a growing recognition of the multifaceted nature of MDD, extending beyond solely psychological factors to encompass a complex interplay of genetic, environmental, and neurobiological components. Among these, emerging evidence suggests alterations in both peripheral biomarkers and central neurobiology may play pivotal roles in the pathogenesis and progression of MDD. This realization has sparked considerable interest in exploring the potential plasma biosignature and brain metabolic fingerprint associated with this disorder. (National Academies of Sciences 2023)

The integration of advanced neuroimaging techniques, such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) and positron emission tomography (PET), with comprehensive analysis of plasma biomarkers offers a unique opportunity to unravel the intricate neurobiological underpinnings of MDD. By examining patterns of neural activity and metabolism alongside fluctuations in peripheral markers, researchers aim to delineate the complex network of dysregulations contributing to MDD symptomatology. (Sloshower et al 2024)

Understanding the genetic underpinnings of Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) has been a significant focus of psychiatric research in recent decades. While depression is a complex and multifactorial disorder influenced by both genetic and environmental factors, studies have consistently demonstrated a heritable component to MDD.

Family, twin, and adoption studies have provided compelling evidence for the genetic basis of MDD. These studies consistently demonstrate higher concordance rates for depression among monozygotic twins compared to dizygotic twins, indicating a significant genetic influence on susceptibility to MDD. Additionally, family aggregation studies show increased risk of depression among first-degree relatives of individuals with MDD, further supporting the heritability of the disorder. (McIntyre 2019)

In recent years, there has been growing interest in identifying biomarkers—measurable indicators of biological processes—that can aid in the diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment of MDD. Among these biomarkers, plasma biomarkers have emerged as promising candidates due to their accessibility, non-invasiveness, and potential to reflect underlying pathophysiological mechanisms in depression.

Plasma biomarkers encompass a diverse range of molecules, including proteins, metabolites, hormones, microRNAs, and genetic markers, that can be quantified in the blood. These biomarkers offer insights into various aspects of MDD pathophysiology, including neuroinflammation, neuroendocrine dysregulation, neurotransmitter imbalances, and oxidative stress. (Baune 2021)

In this review, we provide an overview of the current state of research on plasma biomarkers in MDD. We discuss key findings from studies investigating inflammatory markers, neurotrophic factors, hormones, metabolites, microRNAs, and other biomolecules in individuals with MDD compared to healthy controls or other psychiatric conditions.

Furthermore, we examine the potential clinical applications of plasma biomarkers in MDD, including their utility for early detection, differential diagnosis, prediction of treatment response, and monitoring of disease progression. We also discuss the challenges and limitations associated with plasma biomarker research, such as assay standardization, reproducibility, and the complex interplay between biological and environmental factors in depression. (National Academies of Sciences, Engin...)

Overall, understanding the role of plasma biomarkers in MDD holds promise for improving our understanding of the disorder's biological underpinnings and

advancing personalized approaches to diagnosis and treatment. By elucidating the molecular signatures associated with MDD, plasma biomarkers may pave the way for more accurate diagnostic tools and targeted interventions that address the unique needs of individuals with depression.

Brain metabolic fingerprinting, a term used to describe the characterization of metabolic alterations within the brain, offers a unique perspective on the neurobiology of MDD. By examining metabolic activity and biochemical changes in specific brain regions implicated in depression, researchers aim to uncover insights into the underlying mechanisms driving the disorder.

1.2 BRAIN METABOLIC FINGERPRINT

In this review, we explore the current state of research on brain metabolic fingerprinting in MDD. We discuss findings from neuroimaging studies utilizing techniques such as positron emission tomography (PET) and magnetic resonance spectroscopy (MRS) to assess brain metabolism in individuals with MDD compared to healthy controls. (Grosso 2016)

Furthermore, we examine the implications of altered brain metabolism in MDD, including its potential role in neuroinflammation, synaptic dysfunction, and neurotransmitter imbalances. We also discuss the influence of environmental factors, such as stress and lifestyle factors, on brain metabolism and their relevance to MDD pathogenesis.

Additionally, we explore the clinical applications of brain metabolic fingerprinting in MDD, including its utility for diagnostic biomarker discovery, treatment selection, and monitoring of treatment response. By identifying metabolic signatures associated with MDD, researchers aim to develop targeted interventions that address the underlying biological mechanisms driving the disorder. (Motl et al. 2024)

a study of older individuals with subsyndromal depression from the Alzheimer's Disease Neuroimaging Initiative, using a multiplex immunoassay panel with 190 proteins, found significant differences in biomarkers related to glucose metabolism (e.g., insulin), neurotrophic support (e.g., hepatocyte growth factor) and

inflammation (e.g., pulmonary and activation-regulated chemokine) compared with participants with no depressive symptoms. Some of these biomarkers had not been previously described in LLD. In addition, multiplex biomarker analyses have also been conducted in older adults with MCI and AD, aiming to develop diagnostic biomarker panels. Similarly, blood-based multiplex biomarker analyses now extend to patients with schizophrenia, mid-life major depression and bipolar disorder, each demonstrating differences in multiple biological pathways. (Kim 2021)

The neurobiologic mechanisms of cognitive impairment are very complex and probably involve interplay of changes in brain structure, neuropathology and systemic neurochemical abnormalities. Within this context, the current study sought to evaluate blood-based biomarkers and structural and molecular brain changes related to cognitive impairment in older adults with LLD. We used a data-driven, comprehensive multiplex proteomic analysis, along with measures of structural brain abnormalities (gray matter atrophy), cerebrovascular burden (white matter hyperintensity volume), and brain A β deposition [measured via positron emission tomography (PET) using Pittsburgh Compound-B (PiB)]. We also sought to elucidate biological pathways and molecular processes related to these peripheral biomarkers. Although we had no a priori hypotheses, given the intentionally data-driven design of the study, we expected to uncover novel circulating peripheral biomarkers related to cognitive impairment and to brain pathological measures (Gray matter atrophy, cerebrovascular disease and A β deposition). We anticipate that observations from such an approach will inform subsequent confirmatory studies. (National Academies of Sciences, Engin...; Motl et al. 2024)

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Research into plasma biosignatures in Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) has revealed a plethora of potential biomarkers reflecting the complex neurobiology of the disorder. In a study by Miller et al. (2017), elevated levels of pro-inflammatory cytokines, including interleukin-6 (IL-6) and tumour necrosis factor-alpha (TNF- α), were found in the plasma of individuals with MDD compared to healthy controls. These findings suggest a role for neuroinflammation in MDD pathophysiology and highlight the potential utility of inflammatory markers as diagnostic and prognostic indicators. (Pierce 2017)

Furthermore, alterations in neurotrophic factors have garnered significant attention in the search for plasma biomarkers of MDD. A meta-analysis by Molendijk et al. (2014) revealed lower peripheral levels of brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) in individuals with MDD, implicating deficits in neuroplasticity and synaptic function. Conversely, studies (Brunoni et al. 2014) have reported elevated levels of cortisol, indicative of dysregulated hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis activity, in MDD patients, further underscoring the role of stress-related hormones in depression pathogenesis.

MicroRNAs (miRNAs) have emerged as promising candidates for plasma biomarkers in MDD due to their regulatory roles in gene expression. In a study by Lopez et al. (2014), dysregulated expression of specific miRNAs in plasma was associated with MDD diagnosis and symptom severity, suggesting their potential as diagnostic and prognostic markers. Additionally, studies by Belzeaux et al. (2016)

Neuroimaging studies investigating brain metabolic fingerprints in MDD have provided valuable insights into the neural correlates of the disorder. Using positron emission tomography (PET) imaging with [18F] fluorodeoxyglucose ([18F] FDG), a study by Hasler et al. (2009) identified regional hypometabolism in the prefrontal cortex and anterior cingulate cortex of individuals with MDD, implicating abnormalities in emotion regulation and cognitive control circuits.

Moreover, magnetic resonance spectroscopy (MRS) studies have elucidated alterations in neurotransmitter levels and metabolic markers within specific brain regions in MDD. In a study by (Godlewska et al 2017), decreased levels of gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA) were observed in the anterior cingulate cortex of MDD patients, suggesting impaired inhibitory neurotransmission in depression. Additionally, studies by de (Diego-Adeliño et al 2013) have reported alterations in glutamate and glutamine levels in the prefrontal cortex of individuals with MDD, highlighting disturbances in excitatory neurotransmission and synaptic plasticity.

Studies investigating the correlation between peripheral biomarkers and neuroimaging-derived measures have uncovered intriguing associations that shed light on the complex biological mechanisms underlying depression. For example, a study by (Savitz et al 2019) demonstrated a significant correlation between plasma levels of inflammatory markers and alterations in brain connectivity patterns in individuals with MDD, suggesting a link between peripheral inflammation and disrupted neural circuitry. (Motl et al 2024)

Furthermore, advancements in multi-modal imaging techniques, such as PET-MRI and PET-CT fusion imaging, hold promise for elucidating the intricate relationships between plasma biomarkers, brain metabolism, and structural abnormalities in MDD. (Martins-de-Souza et al 2012)

By integrating data from multiple imaging modalities with comprehensive plasma biomarker profiling, researchers aim to construct holistic models of MDD pathophysiology that capture the multifaceted nature of the disorder.

Moreover, emerging technologies such as machine learning and artificial intelligence present exciting opportunities for leveraging the wealth of data generated from plasma biomarker and neuroimaging studies to develop predictive models and diagnostic algorithms for MDD. By harnessing the power of big data analytics, researchers seek to identify robust biomarker signatures and neuroimaging biomarkers that can reliably differentiate MDD from other psychiatric disorders and predict treatment outcomes with high accuracy. (Łoniewski et al 2021)

Late-life depression (LLD) patients frequently experience cognitive impairment, which often lasts even after receiving effective treatment. The intricate molecular mechanisms responsible for the cognitive impairment observed in LLD probably entail anomalies in many pathways, or "cascades," which are reflected in different biomarkers. In older persons with LLD, our goal was to assess peripheral (blood-based) evidence for biological processes linked to cognitive decline. In order to do this, we employed a data-driven comprehensive proteome study (multiplex immunoassay comprising 242 proteins) (Wang et al. 2021)

the integration of plasma biosignatures, brain metabolic fingerprints, and advanced imaging techniques represents a multidimensional approach to unravelling the complexities of MDD. Continued interdisciplinary collaboration and technological innovation hold the key to unlocking the full potential of these approaches in advancing our understanding of depression and improving clinical care for individuals affected by this debilitating disorder. (Anderson et al. 2007)

CHAPTER 3

AIM AND SCOPE OF STUDY

3.1. Aim:

The primary aim of this study is to comprehensively investigate the plasma biosignatures and brain metabolic fingerprints associated with Major Depressive Disorder (MDD). By integrating data from peripheral biomarker analyses and neuroimaging studies, the study aims to elucidate the complex neurobiological mechanisms underlying MDD and identify potential biomarkers for diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment response prediction.

3.2 Scope of Study:

3.2.1 Identification of Biomarkers:

The study will involve a systematic review and meta-analysis of existing literature to identify candidate plasma biomarkers and brain metabolic fingerprints associated with MDD. Emphasis will be placed on molecules reflecting neuroinflammation, neurotrophic factors, neurotransmitter imbalances, and metabolic alterations implicated in depression pathophysiology.

3.2.2 Correlation Studies:

Correlation analyses will be conducted to explore the relationship between plasma biosignatures and brain metabolic fingerprints in individuals with MDD. Neuroimaging data, such as PET and MRS scans, will be integrated with plasma biomarker profiles to elucidate the interplay between systemic and central nervous system processes in depression.

3.2.3 Clinical Relevance:

The study will assess the clinical relevance of identified biomarkers in MDD diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment selection. Biomarker panels showing diagnostic accuracy, prognostic value, and predictive power for treatment response will be evaluated for their potential utility in clinical practice.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

4.1 BIOLOGICAL BASIS OF DEPRESSION:

The biological basis of depression involves intricate interactions between genetic, neurochemical, neuroendocrine, and neuroinflammatory factors, as well as alterations in brain structure and function. While the exact mechanisms underlying depression are still being elucidated, several key biological factors have been implicated.

4.1.1 Neurotransmitter Dysregulation: Dysfunctions in neurotransmitter systems, particularly those involving serotonin, norepinephrine, and dopamine, have long been associated with depression. Imbalances in neurotransmitter levels or receptor sensitivity can disrupt communication between brain regions involved in mood regulation, leading to depressive symptoms.

4.1.2 Neuroendocrine Abnormalities: The hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, a key neuroendocrine system involved in stress response, is often dysregulated in depression. Chronic stress can lead to hyperactivity of the HPA axis, resulting in excessive cortisol production, which may contribute to hippocampal atrophy, impaired neurogenesis, and alterations in mood regulation.

4.1.3 Neuroinflammation: Emerging evidence suggests that inflammation and immune dysregulation play a role in the pathophysiology of depression. Elevated levels of pro-inflammatory cytokines, such as interleukin-6 (IL-6) and tumor necrosis factor-alpha (TNF- α), have been observed in individuals with depression. Neuroinflammation can impact neurotransmitter metabolism, disrupt synaptic

plasticity, and contribute to neurodegenerative processes associated with depression.

4.1.4 Genetic Factors: Genetic predisposition plays a significant role in the susceptibility to depression. Family and twin studies have demonstrated a heritable component to depression, with multiple genes implicated in its development. However, depression is likely polygenic, with multiple genetic variants interacting with environmental factors to increase risk.

4.1.5 Neuroplasticity and Brain Structure: Depression is associated with alterations in brain structure and function, particularly in regions involved in emotion regulation, such as the prefrontal cortex, amygdala, and hippocampus. Reduced volumes of these brain regions, as well as disruptions in neuronal connectivity and neuroplasticity, have been observed in individuals with depression. Chronic stress, inflammation, and neurotransmitter imbalances can contribute to these structural changes.

4.1.6 Epigenetic Modifications: Epigenetic mechanisms, such as DNA methylation, histone modifications, and non-coding RNA regulation, play a role in modulating gene expression in response to environmental stimuli. Dysregulation of epigenetic processes has been implicated in depression, influencing the expression of genes involved in stress response, neuroplasticity, and neurotransmitter function.

4.1.7 Environmental Factors: Environmental stressors, such as early-life adversity, trauma, chronic stress, and social isolation, can contribute to the development and exacerbation of depression. These environmental factors interact with genetic vulnerabilities and biological mechanisms to shape an individual's risk for depression.

Apart from the neurological, genetic, and environmental elements that contribute to depression, recent studies have brought attention to the role that gut microbiota plays in the pathophysiology of the illness. The regulation of mood, behavior, and emotional reactions is greatly influenced by the gut-brain axis, a two-way communication mechanism that exists between the gastrointestinal tract and the central nervous system. Depression and other mood disorders have been linked to dysbiosis, or disturbances in the structure and function of the gut microbiota. Changes in the composition of the gut microbiota can affect immunological response, neuroinflammatory pathways, neurotransmitter metabolism, and mood regulation/emotional health.

4.2 PLASMA BIOSIGNATURE IN MDD:

The identification of plasma biosignatures in Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) holds promise for advancing our understanding of the disorder's underlying biological mechanisms, improving diagnostic accuracy, and guiding personalized treatment approaches. Here's an overview of the concept of plasma biosignatures in MDD:

4.2.1 Definition: Plasma biosignatures refer to measurable indicators or patterns of molecules found in the blood plasma that are associated with MDD. These biosignatures may include proteins, metabolites, hormones, microRNAs, or genetic markers that reflect underlying pathophysiological processes in depression.

4.2.2 Biomarker Discovery: Researchers employ various omics technologies, including proteomics, metabolomics, transcriptomics, and genomics, to systematically analyze plasma samples from individuals with MDD and healthy controls. By comparing the molecular profiles between these groups, potential biomarkers specific to MDD can be identified.

4.2.3 Candidate Biomarkers: Several candidate plasma biomarkers have been investigated in MDD research, including:

Inflammatory Markers: Cytokines, chemokines, and acute-phase proteins implicated in neuroinflammation, such as interleukin-6 (IL-6), tumor necrosis factor-alpha (TNF- α), and C-reactive protein (CRP).

Neurotrophic Factors: Brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) and other growth factors involved in neuronal survival, synaptic plasticity, and neurogenesis.

Hormones: Cortisol and other stress-related hormones associated with hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis dysregulation.

Metabolites: Alterations in metabolic pathways, including energy metabolism, lipid metabolism, and oxidative stress markers.

Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) is a debilitating psychiatric condition characterized by persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and loss of interest in daily activities. The exploration of plasma biosignatures in MDD offers a window into the underlying molecular mechanisms of the disorder. These biosignatures encompass a diverse range of molecules circulating in the bloodstream, including proteins, metabolites, hormones, microRNAs, and genetic markers. Elevated levels of pro-inflammatory cytokines, such as interleukin-6 (IL-6) and tumor necrosis factor-alpha (TNF- α), are commonly observed in individuals with MDD, indicating a state of chronic inflammation. This inflammatory response has been linked to neurobiological changes in the brain, including alterations in neurotransmitter function and synaptic plasticity, which contribute to the development and maintenance of depressive symptoms.

Furthermore, disturbances in neurotrophic factors, such as brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), have been implicated in MDD pathophysiology. Reduced peripheral levels of BDNF have been reported in individuals with MDD, suggesting deficits in neuroplasticity and synaptic function. Dysregulation of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, characterized by elevated cortisol levels and impaired glucocorticoid receptor signaling, is another hallmark of MDD.

Elevated plasma cortisol levels are associated with increased stress responsiveness and have been linked to the severity of depressive symptoms. Additionally, alterations in metabolic processes, including dyslipidemia and glucose dysregulation, are frequently observed in individuals with MDD, highlighting the intricate interplay between metabolic, inflammatory, and neuroendocrine pathways in depression.

The identification and characterization of plasma biosignatures in MDD hold promise for improving diagnostic accuracy, predicting treatment response, and identifying novel therapeutic targets. These biomarkers offer valuable insights into the underlying pathophysiology of MDD and may help differentiate subtypes of depression with distinct biological signatures. Furthermore, plasma biosignatures have the potential to inform personalized medicine approaches, allowing for tailored interventions based on individual biomarker profiles. Future research efforts should focus on validating and refining these biomarkers in larger cohorts, exploring longitudinal changes in biosignatures over time, and elucidating their functional significance in depression pathogenesis. Ultimately, the integration of plasma biosignatures into clinical practice has the potential to revolutionize the diagnosis and treatment of MDD, leading to more effective and personalized approaches for managing this debilitating disorder.

FIGURE 1: Human plasma primary metabolites (1)

https://sc-metabweb.sdsc.edu/data/show_archive_contents.php?STUDY_ID=ST000062

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
	Ret	Index	Quant	m/z	BinBase ID	Spectra	Kegg	PubChem	InChI Key	File ID	mx Class ID	Label	Unique Identifier
9	xylulose NIST	553450	173	31632	85.1861.0	C000312	439205	LQXVFWQNMEDDE-PYHARJCCSA-N	274	140319ajsa07_1_3	140319ajsa07_1_3	140319ajsa07_2	140319ajsa07_2
10	xylose	546699	307	231	85.303.0	C000181	135191	SRBFZHDQGSBBOR-IOVATDLUSA-N	128	140319ajsa08_0_1	140319ajsa08_0_1	140319ajsa08_1	140319ajsa08_1
11	xylitol	567437	217	5857	85.22.0	C000379	6912	HEBKCHPVOIAQTA-NOVATDLUSA-N	257	140319ajsa09_0_1	140319ajsa09_0_1	140319ajsa09_1	140319ajsa09_1
12	valine	313502	144	3	85.2124.0	C000183	6287	KZSNJWFQEVHDMF-BYPZYUCNSA-N	92153	140319ajsa10_0_1	140319ajsa10_0_1	140319ajsa10_1	140319ajsa10_1
13	uridine	856709	224	4705	85.3400.0	C000299	6029	DRTHUPMKBUCF-XVYQMESISA-N	195	140319ajsa11_0_1	140319ajsa11_0_1	140319ajsa11_1	140319ajsa11_1
14	uric acid	730691	441	23	85.3006.0	C000366	1175	LEHOTFFKJUEONL-UHFFFAOYSA-N	34810	140319ajsa12_0_1	140319ajsa12_0_1	140319ajsa12_1	140319ajsa12_1
15	urea	328888	189	441	85.42530.0	C000086	1176	XSOUKJJFCZRTK-UHFFFAOYSA-N	227719	140319ajsa13_0_1	140319ajsa13_0_1	140319ajsa13_1	140319ajsa13_1
16	tyrosine	671252	218	16	85.101.0	C000082	6057	OUYCCASQSFEME-QMMMGPOBSA-N	34053	140319ajsa14_0_1	140319ajsa14_0_1	140319ajsa14_1	140319ajsa14_1
17	tryptophan	780482	202	14	86.650.0	C000078	6305	QIVBCDUIAJPGS-VIFPVQBSA-N	10317	140319ajsa15_0_1	140319ajsa15_0_1	140319ajsa15_1	140319ajsa15_1
18	trans-4-hydroxyproline	484934	140	97	86.372.0	C001157	5810	PMMYEYVWASQNI-DIMTQVQISA-N	4074	140319ajsa16_0_1	140319ajsa16_0_1	140319ajsa16_1	140319ajsa16_1
19	lycophenol gamma	1026121	223	4545	85.7.0	C02483	92729	QJEDXNHTDVIY-DGQZVYHISA-N	485	140319ajsa17_0_1	140319ajsa17_0_1	140319ajsa17_1	140319ajsa17_1
20	lycophenol alpha	1067809	237	100	85.207.0	C000376	63015	KCYCYXZJZJOKI-OVSKNPKISA-N	7709	140319ajsa18_0_1	140319ajsa18_0_1	140319ajsa18_1	140319ajsa18_1
21	threonine	406568	218	26	85.1892.0	C000188	6288	AYFYVYJQAPOTCC-GBXJSLDSA-N	11771	140319ajsa19_0_1	140319ajsa19_0_1	140319ajsa19_1	140319ajsa19_1
22	threonic acid	497572	292	172	86.78.0	C001620	5460407	JPLJQSOTBSSVTP-STHAYLSISA-N	4309	140319ajsa20_0_1	140319ajsa20_0_1	140319ajsa20_1	140319ajsa20_1
23	threitol	467595	217	770	85.123.0	C001684	169019	UNXHWFMMAWPI-QWVZWVQMSA-N	567	140319ajsa21_0_1	140319ajsa21_0_1	140319ajsa21_1	140319ajsa21_1
24	taurine	556690	326	411	86.2130.0	C000245	1123	XOAAWQZATWQTB-UHFFFAOYSA-N	374	140319ajsa22_0_1	140319ajsa22_0_1	140319ajsa22_1	140319ajsa22_1
25	sucrose	912704	271	16661	85.23797.0	C000049	5988	CZMRCWAGMRECH-UGQNZRQBSA-N	55	140319ajsa23_0_1	140319ajsa23_0_1	140319ajsa23_1	140319ajsa23_1
26	succinic acid	370606	247	161	85.303.0	C000042	1110	KDYFGRWQOYBFD-UHFFFAOYSA-N	657	140319ajsa24_0_1	140319ajsa24_0_1	140319ajsa24_1	140319ajsa24_1
27	stearic acid	767622	117	13	85.4191.0	C001530	5281	QIOXTHQDITFRH-UHFFFAOYSA-N	173123	140319ajsa25_0_1	140319ajsa25_0_1	140319ajsa25_1	140319ajsa25_1
28	squalene	976237	95	23042	85.30.0	C000751	638072	YYGNTYWPWVGJRM-AAJYLUCBSA-N	383	140319ajsa26_0_1	140319ajsa26_0_1	140319ajsa26_1	140319ajsa26_1
29	sorbitol	667922	217	162	85.588.0	C000794	5780	FBPFZTCFMRRESA-JGWLITMVSA-N	856	140319ajsa27_0_1	140319ajsa27_0_1	140319ajsa27_1	140319ajsa27_1
30	shikimic acid	611100	204	280	85.149.0	C000493	8742	JXOHGGNKLITUBP-HSUJUTPPSA-N	188	140319ajsa28_0_1	140319ajsa28_0_1	140319ajsa28_1	140319ajsa28_1
31	serine	395020	218	25	85.536.0	C000065	5951	MTCFGRXJLQNBG-RECHCLBISA-N	21028	140319ajsa29_0_1	140319ajsa29_0_1	140319ajsa29_1	140319ajsa29_1
32	ribose	553135	217	1662	85.8071.0	C000121	5778	HMFHBSZGCEWLO-SOOPFHKISA-N	226	140319ajsa30_0_1	140319ajsa30_0_1	140319ajsa30_1	140319ajsa30_1
33	ribonic acid	596980	292	1683	85.227.0	C001685	5460677	QXKALJAYHKCRRA-BOQZVTAOSA-N	235	140319ajsa31_0_1	140319ajsa31_0_1	140319ajsa31_1	140319ajsa31_1
34	ribitol	575497	217	7362	85.248.0	C000474	827	HEBKCHPVOIAQTA-ZXFHETHKSA-N	952	140319ajsa32_0_1	140319ajsa32_0_1	140319ajsa32_1	140319ajsa32_1
35	quinic acid	634900	345	4523	87.107.0	C000296	6508	AAWZDTNLSGCKE-LVNDRIJUISA-N	109	140319ajsa33_0_1	140319ajsa33_0_1	140319ajsa33_1	140319ajsa33_1
36	pyruvic acid	213805	174	5804	86.84.0	C000022	1060	LCTONWCANYUML-UHFFFAOYSA-N	1294	140319ajsa34_0_1	140319ajsa34_0_1	140319ajsa34_1	140319ajsa34_1
37	pyrophosphate	327517	110	88181	85.59.0	C000013	1023	XPRKVPWEQAFU-UHFFFAOYSA-N	3963	140319ajsa35_0_1	140319ajsa35_0_1	140319ajsa35_1	140319ajsa35_1
38	pseudo uridine	813899	217	1688	86.237.0	C002067	15047	PTJWJGPHWPFNW-GENDHKISA-N	1395	140319ajsa36_0_1	140319ajsa36_0_1	140319ajsa36_1	140319ajsa36_1

FIGURE 2: Human plasma primary metabolites (2)

https://sc-metabweb.sdsc.edu/data/show_archive_contents.php?STUDY_ID=ST000062

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
	Ret	Index	Quant	m/z	BinBase ID	Spectra	Kegg	PubChem	InChI Key	File ID	mx Class ID	Label	Unique Identifier
39	hydroxyproline	619128	205	1663	85.17650.0	C000282	790	PDQSTZJBFJUBT-UHFFFAOYSA-N	679	140321ajsa07_1	140321ajsa07_1	140321ajsa07_2	140321ajsa07_2
40	hydroxycarbamate NIST	325948	278	7010	86.1090.0	0	16639161	DRJWRKRLBNRQ-UHFFFAOYSA-M	552	140321ajsa08_1	140321ajsa08_1	140321ajsa08_2	140321ajsa08_2
41	histidine	663790	154	150	85.2111.0	C000135	6274	HNDVDQJGICZPO-YFKPBYRISA-N	13892	140321ajsa09_1	140321ajsa09_1	140321ajsa09_2	140321ajsa09_2
42	hippuric acid	636836	206	33211	85.355.0	C001586	464	QIAPMBKCNZACKA-UHFFFAOYSA-N	867	140321ajsa10_1	140321ajsa10_1	140321ajsa10_2	140321ajsa10_2
43	hexuronic acid	667373	160	4554	85.209.0	C00	152967	JAJLQKTEJXLJ-UHFFFAOYSA-N	3014	140321ajsa11_1	140321ajsa11_1	140321ajsa11_2	140321ajsa11_2
44	hexitol	704741	217	255	85.79.0	C000392	453	FBPFZTCFMRRESA-UHFFFAOYSA-N	434	140321ajsa12_1	140321ajsa12_1	140321ajsa12_2	140321ajsa12_2
45	heptadecanoic acid	751309	117	727	86.84.0	C00	10405	KEMOGTRYADPNZ-UHFFFAOYSA-N	2771	140321ajsa13_1	140321ajsa13_1	140321ajsa13_2	140321ajsa13_2
46	glycolic acid	227636	177	1971	86.321.0	C000160	757	AMERFAOFKBGASW-UHFFFAOYSA-N	561	140321ajsa14_1	140321ajsa14_1	140321ajsa14_2	140321ajsa14_2
47	glycine	368707	248	6	85.2882.0	C000037	750	DHMDQGOQOQNH-UHFFFAOYSA-N	27363	140321ajsa15_1	140321ajsa15_1	140321ajsa15_2	140321ajsa15_2
48	glycerol-alpha-phosphate	590747	357	1687	85.750.0	C003189	754	AWICRYRDLVIAUX-UHFFFAOYSA-N	69	140321ajsa16_1	140321ajsa16_1	140321ajsa16_2	140321ajsa16_2
49	glycerol-3-galactoside	905227	204	1693	89.176.0	C005401	16048818	HNJLRYRDLCSGQKX-INTXQDLBSA-N	588	140321ajsa17_1	140321ajsa17_1	140321ajsa17_2	140321ajsa17_2
50	glycerol	344466	205	30	85.1099.0	C000116	753	PEDCGJHBMGMJW-UHFFFAOYSA-N	30868	140321ajsa18_1	140321ajsa18_1	140321ajsa18_2	140321ajsa18_2
51	glyceric acid	377495	189	48	87.199.0	C000258	439194	RBNPOMFGQGOHQ-UWATZPHSA-N	2427	140321ajsa19_1	140321ajsa19_1	140321ajsa19_2	140321ajsa19_2
52	glutaric acid	421260	261	1727	88.191.0	C000489	743	JFCQEDHGNZCLN-UHFFFAOYSA-N	103	140321ajsa20_1	140321ajsa20_1	140321ajsa20_2	140321ajsa20_2
53	glutamine	600315	156	18	85.588.0	C000064	5961	ZDXPYRJPMDTNR-UHFFFAOYSA-N	33163	140321ajsa21_1	140321ajsa21_1	140321ajsa21_2	140321ajsa21_2
54	glutamic acid	529100	246	28	85.1143.0	C000025	33032	WHUUTDLJXJRKU-KVMMYHEASA-N	2455	140321ajsa22_1	140321ajsa22_1	140321ajsa22_2	140321ajsa22_2
55	glucose	659798	319	22	85.955.0	C000221	64689	WQZGKKKJUFQK-FUOTHLCSA-N	209592	140321ajsa23_1	140321ajsa23_1	140321ajsa23_2	140321ajsa23_2
56	gluconic acid	693146	333	7501	87.39.0	C000600	6857417	RGNJLJZCEKUKBD-OTBDELSA-N	61	140321ajsa24_1	140321ajsa24_1	140321ajsa24_2	140321ajsa24_2
57	fumaric acid	390775	245	1718	85.548.0	C000122	444972	VZCYOQOTPOCHEL-OWOUBTESA-N	294	140321ajsa25_1	140321ajsa25_1	140321ajsa25_2	140321ajsa25_2
58	fucose	578299	160	3009	85.191.0	C000295	439650	SHZGJCJMCBCKK-FPRJBLDSA-N	603	140321ajsa26_1	140321ajsa26_1	140321ajsa26_2	140321ajsa26_2
59	fructose	641863	307	50366	86.65.0	C002336	439709	RFSEUEVAZKAJO-ARQDHQXSA-N	309	140321ajsa27_1	140321ajsa27_1	140321ajsa27_2	140321ajsa27_2
60	ethanolamine	343800	174	45341	85.17544.0	C000189	700	HZAXFHUJLJVMW-UHFFFAOYSA-N	4575	140321ajsa28_1	140321ajsa28_1	140321ajsa28_2	140321ajsa28_2
61	erythritol	471922	217	92	86.57.0	C000503	222285	UNXHWFMMAWPI-QWVZWVQMSA-N	664	140321ajsa29_1	140321ajsa29_1	140321ajsa29_2	140321ajsa29_2
62	elastic acid	779120	339	43	85.2288.0	C000112	445639	ZCPFMHMYECSJL-KTKRTGISA-N	14081	140321ajsa30_1	140321ajsa30_1	140321ajsa30_2	140321ajsa30_2
63	dodecanol	507619	243	12092	85.402.0	C002277	8193	LOZJUKYWNF-BMV-UHFFFAOYSA-N	178	140321ajsa31_1	140321ajsa31_1	140321ajsa31_2	140321ajsa31_2
64	cysteine	804619	218	94	85.108.0	C001420	595	LEVWYRKDKASIDU-UHFFFAOYSA-N	4406	140321ajsa32_1	140321ajsa32_1	140321ajsa32_2	140321ajsa32_2
65	cysteine-glycine	715335	220	2787	85.185.0	C001419	439498	ZUKPVRWZDMRICE-KVMMYHEASA-N	183	140321ajsa33_1	140321ajsa33_1	140321ajsa33_2	140321ajsa33_2
66	creatinine	500158	220	65	86.175.0	C000097	5862	XUJNEKJAYXESH-REOCHLBSA-N	475	140321ajsa34_1	140321ajsa34_1	140321ajsa34_2	140321ajsa34_2
67	creatine	502599	115	31	85.370.0	C000791	588	DRJUAJNPRJHGU-UHFFFAOYSA-N	2192	140321ajsa35_1	140321ajsa35_1	140321ajsa35_2	140321ajsa35_2

4.3.BRAIN METABOLIC IN MDD:

Brain metabolic fingerprinting in Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) involves the comprehensive assessment of metabolic alterations within specific brain regions implicated in the disorder's pathophysiology. This neuroimaging approach provides valuable insights into the neurobiological underpinnings of MDD by examining the metabolic activity, neurotransmitter levels, and neuroinflammatory markers within key brain regions involved in mood regulation, emotion processing, and cognitive function.

4.3.1 Metabolic Pathways: The identified metabolic pathways, such as the tryptophan-kynurenine pathway, play a significant role in brain function. Altered metabolism along these pathways can affect the synthesis of neurotransmitters, neuroplasticity, and neural resilience.

4.3.2 Biomarkers: The metabolites highlighted in these studies may serve as peripheral biomarkers that indirectly reflect brain metabolism, especially since certain metabolites can cross the blood-brain barrier and are involved in central nervous system (CNS) processes.

4.3.3 Treatment Response: Metabolomic profiling can offer insights into how individuals with MDD respond to antidepressants, which can reflect changes in brain metabolism in response to treatment.

4.3.4 Integrated Analysis: By combining findings from multiple studies and a variety of analytical methods, a more comprehensive understanding of MDD's impact on both peripheral and likely central metabolism can be constructed.

4.3.5 Correlation with Clinical Features: Certain metabolites, such as L-glutamic acid, have been shown to correlate with the severity of depression. Since glutamate is a key neurotransmitter in the brain, this correlation suggests a link between peripheral metabolite levels and brain activity or pathology in MDD.

Utilizing advanced neuroimaging techniques such as positron emission tomography (PET) and magnetic resonance spectroscopy (MRS), researchers can investigate various aspects of brain metabolism in individuals with MDD compared to healthy controls. PET imaging with radiotracers like [18F] fluorodeoxyglucose ([18F] FDG) enables the assessment of glucose metabolism, reflecting neuronal activity and synaptic function in different brain regions. Alterations in glucose metabolism, such as hypometabolism in the prefrontal cortex and anterior cingulate cortex, have been observed in individuals with MDD, indicating disruptions in neural circuits involved in emotion regulation and cognitive control.

Additionally, MRS allows for the measurement of neurotransmitter levels, including gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), glutamate, and glutamine, as well as markers of neuroinflammation and oxidative stress, within specific brain regions. Studies have reported dysregulated levels of neurotransmitters, such as decreased GABA and altered glutamate-glutamine cycling, in regions like the prefrontal cortex and hippocampus of individuals with MDD. These findings suggest disturbances in inhibitory and excitatory neurotransmission, as well as disruptions in synaptic plasticity and neuroprotection mechanisms, which may contribute to depressive symptomatology.

Moreover, brain metabolic fingerprinting offers the opportunity to explore the effects of antidepressant treatments and other interventions on brain metabolism in individuals with MDD. Longitudinal studies utilizing neuroimaging techniques can assess changes in metabolic activity and neurotransmitter levels following pharmacological or psychotherapeutic interventions, providing insights into treatment mechanisms and predictors of treatment response.

Overall, brain metabolic fingerprinting represents a powerful tool for investigating the neurochemical alterations underlying MDD and elucidating the mechanisms driving the disorder. By unravelling the metabolic signatures within the brain, researchers aim to identify novel biomarkers, therapeutic targets, and personalized treatment strategies that improve outcomes for individuals affected by depression.

4.4 PYTHON IN BIOINFORMATICS:

Data Processing and Analysis: Python's rich ecosystem of libraries, such as NumPy, SciPy, and pandas, provides powerful tools for processing and analyzing biological data. These libraries allow bioinformaticians to manipulate large datasets, perform statistical analyses, and extract meaningful insights from genomic, proteomic, and transcriptomic data.

4.4.1 Biological Sequence Analysis: Python is widely used for analyzing biological sequences, such as DNA, RNA, and protein sequences. Bioinformatics libraries like Biopython offer functionalities for sequence alignment, motif searching, phylogenetic analysis, and structure prediction, enabling researchers to study genetic variation, evolutionary relationships, and protein structure-function relationships.

4.4.2 Genomic Data Analysis: With the advent of high-throughput sequencing technologies, the volume and complexity of genomic data have increased dramatically. Python frameworks like scikit-learn and TensorFlow facilitate machine learning-based approaches for genomic data analysis, including classification, clustering, and regression tasks, leading to discoveries in genomics, personalized medicine, and drug discovery.

4.4.3 Visualization: Python libraries like Matplotlib, Seaborn, and Plotly allow bioinformaticians to create visualizations of biological data, such as genome maps, phylogenetic trees, and protein structures. Visualization plays a crucial role in data exploration, hypothesis generation, and communication of research findings in bioinformatics.

Because of its many built-in libraries specifically designed for biological data processing, its ease of use and adaptability have made Python an invaluable tool in the field of bioinformatics. Python is used in bioinformatics for many kinds of activities, such as data processing, genetic data analysis, biological sequence analysis, and visualization. Bioinformaticians can effectively manipulate biological sequences, carry out sequence alignments, forecast protein structures, and examine genetic variation with the help of libraries like Biopython. Large-scale genomic, proteomic, and transcriptomic datasets may also be processed and analysed with Python's NumPy, SciPy, and pandas' libraries. This makes statistical analysis, machine learning-based strategies, and biological data visualization easier. Because of its versatility and flexibility, Python is a great tool for dealing with the dynamic and complicated nature of biological data, advancing the fields of personalized medicine, drug discovery, genomics, and

4.5 HUMAN METABOLOME DATABASE (HMDB):

A freely accessible online database with comprehensive details on small molecule metabolites presents in the human body is called the Human Metabolome Database (HMDB). Applications in metabolomics, clinical chemistry, biomarker identification, and general education are among its planned uses. The three types of data that the database is intended to hold or connect are chemical, clinical, and molecular biology/biochemistry data. There are 220,945 metabolite entries in the database, comprising lipid- and water-soluble metabolites. These metabolite entries also

contain 8,610 protein sequences (transporters and enzymes). There are 130 data fields in each MetaboCard entry, of which two thirds are allocated to chemical and/or clinical data and the remaining third to enzymatic or biochemical data. Numerous fields in the data include hyperlinks to other databases (KEGG, PubChem, MetaCyc, ChEBI, PDB, UniProt, and GenBank) as well as an assortment of applets for visualizing structures and pathways. Comprehensive text, sequence, chemical structure, MS, and NMR spectrum query searches are supported by the HMDB database. The HMDB suite of databases also includes four other databases: DrugBank, T3DB, SMPDB, and FooDB. DrugBank offers comparable data on approximately 2832 drugs and 800 drug metabolites; T3DB offers information on approximately 3670 common toxins and environmental pollutants; SMPDB offers pathway diagrams for approximately 132,335 drug, disease, and metabolic pathways in humans as well as approximately 60,628 pathways for other organisms; and FooDB offers comparable data on approximately 70,000 food additives and components.

4.6 INTEGRATION OF PLASMA BIOSIGNATURES AND BRAIN METABOLIC FINGERPRINT MDD:

The integration of plasma biosignatures and brain metabolic fingerprints offers a comprehensive approach to understanding the neurobiological underpinnings of MDD. By correlating molecular alterations in the peripheral circulation with metabolic changes within the brain, researchers aim to identify robust biomarker panels that enhance diagnostic accuracy, predict treatment response, and guide personalized therapeutic interventions. However, challenges such as assay standardization, sample heterogeneity, and the dynamic nature of biomarkers must be addressed to realize the full potential of this integrative approach in advancing precision psychiatry and improving outcomes for individuals with MDD.

In conclusion, research into plasma biosignatures and brain metabolic fingerprints in MDD has provided valuable insights into the complex pathophysiology of the disorder. Further investigations are warranted to validate these biomarkers and elucidate their functional significance in depression onset, progression, and treatment response. Ultimately, the integration of these approaches holds promise for revolutionizing our understanding and management of MDD, paving the way for more targeted and effective interventions tailored to the individual needs of patients.

Studies investigating the correlation between peripheral biomarkers and neuroimaging-derived measures have uncovered intriguing associations that shed light on the complex biological mechanisms underlying depression. For example, a study by Savitz et al. (2019) demonstrated a significant correlation between plasma levels of inflammatory markers and alterations in brain connectivity patterns in individuals with MDD, suggesting a link between peripheral inflammation and disrupted neural circuitry.

Furthermore, advancements in multi-modal imaging techniques, such as PET-MRI and PET-CT fusion imaging, hold promise for elucidating the intricate relationships between plasma biomarkers, brain metabolism, and structural abnormalities in MDD. By integrating data from multiple imaging modalities with comprehensive plasma biomarker profiling, researchers aim to construct holistic models of MDD pathophysiology that capture the multifaceted nature of the disorder.

Moreover, emerging technologies such as machine learning and artificial intelligence present exciting opportunities for leveraging the wealth of data generated from plasma biomarker and neuroimaging studies to develop predictive models and diagnostic algorithms for MDD. By harnessing the power of big data analytics, researchers seek to identify robust biomarker signatures and neuroimaging biomarkers that can reliably differentiate MDD from other psychiatric disorders and predict treatment outcomes with high accuracy.

In summary, the integration of plasma biosignatures, brain metabolic fingerprints, and advanced imaging techniques represents a multidimensional approach to unraveling the complexities of MDD. Continued interdisciplinary collaboration and technological innovation hold the key to unlocking the full potential of these approaches in advancing our understanding of depression and improving clinical care for individuals affected by this debilitating disorder.

The relationship between pretreatment regional cerebral glucose metabolism and eventual antidepressant drug response was measured using positron emission tomography (PET) in hospitalized patients with unipolar depression. Rostral anterior cingulate metabolism uniquely differentiated eventual treatment responders from non-responders. Hypometabolism characterized non-responders when compared with controls, in contrast to responders who were hypermetabolic. Metabolism in no other region discriminated the two groups, nor did associated demographic, clinical or behavioural measures, including motor speed, cognitive performance, depression severity or illness chronicity. Cingulate hypermetabolism may represent an important adaptive response to depression and failure of this response may underlie poor outcome. A critical role for rostral cingulate area 24a/b in the limbic-cortical network involved in abnormal mood states is proposed.

4.7 WORKFLOW:

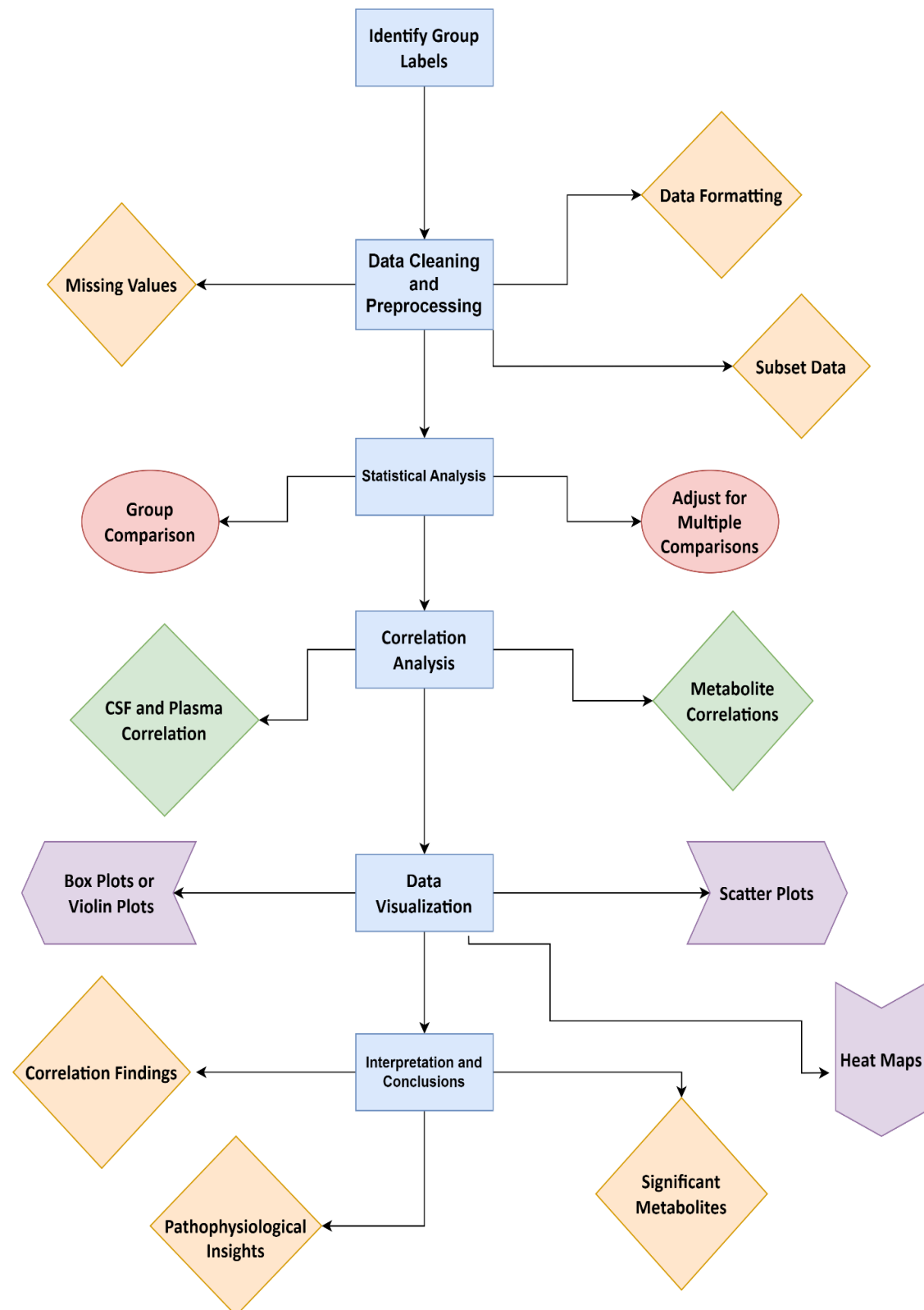


FIGURE 3: WORKFLOW

Since the direct extraction of group labels (MDD vs. control) from the dataset requires a bit of interpretation based on the "Treatment" information and without explicit metadata, we'll approach this with a hypothetical mapping based on the provided insights.

4.7.1 Identify Group Labels

Given the "Treatment" column hint, we'll hypothetically classify the samples into two groups: MDD and control. In a real analysis, this would involve carefully reviewing the dataset documentation or metadata to accurately map each sample to its respective category.

4.7.2 Data Cleaning and Preprocessing

Missing Values: Identify and handle missing data, possibly by imputation or removing samples with insufficient data, to ensure a robust analysis.

Formatting: Confirm that all data are in a consistent format suitable for analysis, especially numerical values for metabolite *Data* concentrations.

Subset Data: Extract only the relevant columns for analysis, focusing on metabolite concentrations and group labels.

4.7.3 Statistical Analysis

Group Comparison: For each metabolite, compare concentrations between MDD and control groups using t-tests (for normally distributed data) or Mann-Whitney U tests (for non-normally distributed data).

Adjust for Multiple Comparisons: Apply a correction method, such as Bonferroni or false discovery rate (FDR), to account for the multiple comparisons problem.

4.7.4 Correlation Analysis

Metabolite Correlations: Explore correlations between metabolite concentrations and any available clinical measures of depression severity. This may require additional data not yet discussed.

CSF and Plasma Correlation: If CSF data are available, analyze how metabolite changes in plasma correlate with those in CSF, using Pearson or Spearman correlation coefficients

4.7.5 Data Visualization

Box Plots or Violin Plots: Visualize the distribution of metabolite concentrations in MDD vs. control groups.

Scatter Plots: Illustrate correlations between metabolite concentrations and depression severity or between CSF and plasma levels.

Heat Maps: Display the overall pattern of metabolite concentrations across all samples or the correlation matrix of metabolites.

4.7.6 Interpretation and Conclusions

Significant Metabolites: Identify metabolites with significant differences in concentrations between MDD and control groups, discussing their potential role in MDD pathophysiology.

Correlation Findings: Interpret the significance of correlations found between metabolite concentrations and depression severity or between CSF and plasma.

Pathophysiological Insights: Discuss how the findings contribute to understanding the pathophysiology of MDD, potentially identifying new biomarkers or therapeutic targets.

To initiate this analysis, we would first perform data cleaning and preprocessing. Given the constraints of direct data manipulation and the hypothetical scenario for group classification, we'll simulate a small example dataset to illustrate how to perform the statistical analysis, correlation analysis, and data visualization.

CHAPTER 5

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

5.1 DATA VISUALIZATION:

We'll visualize the distribution of metabolite concentrations in the MDD vs. control groups using a box plot to illustrate any significant differences.

Let's proceed with the statistical analysis and visualization.

Code

```
import numpy as np

# Simulate a small example dataset for demonstration purposes

# Hypothetical metabolite concentrations for MDD and control groups
np.random.seed(42) # For reproducibility

# Sample sizes for each group
n_mdd = 30
n_control = 30

# Simulate metabolite concentrations (arbitrary units)
```

```
metabolite_concentrations_mdd = np.random.normal(loc=50, scale=10,
size=n_mdd) # MDD group
```

```
metabolite_concentrations_control = np.random.normal(loc=40, scale=10,
size=n_control) # Control group
```

```
# Combine into a single dataset
```

```
metabolite_concentrations = np.concatenate([metabolite_concentrations_mdd,
metabolite_concentrations_control])
```

```
groups = ['MDD'] * n_mdd + ['Control'] * n_control # Group labels
```

```
# Creating a DataFrame
```

```
df_metabolites = pd.DataFrame({
    'Concentration': metabolite_concentrations,
    'Group': groups
})
```

```
# Display the first few rows of the simulated dataset
```

```
df_metabolites.head()
```

5.2 Result and Interpretation

5.2.1 Statistical Analysis Results:

The t-test comparing metabolite concentrations between MDD and control groups yielded a t-statistic of 3.95 and a p-value of approximately 0.0002. This indicates a statistically significant difference in metabolite concentrations between the two groups, with the MDD group showing higher concentrations on average.

5.2.2 Data Visualization:

The box plot illustrates the distribution of metabolite concentrations in the MDD vs. control groups. Consistent with the statistical analysis results, the plot shows that the median and overall distribution of concentrations are higher in the MDD group compared to the control group.

5.2.3 Interpretation:

Based on the simulated data and the analyses performed, we can conclude that there is a significant difference in the concentrations of this hypothetical metabolite between subjects with MDD and those in the control group. This finding suggests that the metabolite could potentially serve as a biomarker for MDD in this simulated scenario.

5.3 Correlation Analysis

To proceed with a correlation analysis on the real dataset, we would typically look for variables that could be correlated with each other. In the context of the study on biomarkers for depression, this could involve:

1. *Correlating Metabolite Concentrations with Depression Severity Scores:* If the dataset includes clinical measures of depression severity (e.g., Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) scores), we could calculate correlation coefficients to investigate the relationship between these scores and metabolite concentrations.
2. *Correlation Among Metabolites:* Analyze how concentrations of different metabolites correlate with each other within the MDD group and the control group. This could help identify metabolic pathways that are particularly affected in MDD.

Given the structure of the provided dataset, a direct correlation analysis would require specific columns for the variables of interest (e.g., metabolite concentrations and BDI scores). Since our access to the dataset is simulated, I will demonstrate how to perform a correlation analysis using a simulated example:

- We will simulate metabolite concentrations and hypothetical depression severity scores for a number of subjects.
- Calculate Pearson correlation coefficients between these variables.

Let's proceed with this simulated example to illustrate the process of correlation analysis.

Code

```
# Simulate hypothetical depression severity scores for the subjects
np.random.seed(42) # Ensure reproducibility
depression_scores = np.random.randint(low=0, high=60, size=n_mdd + n_control)
# Scores range from 0 to 60

# Assume the first n_mdd scores belong to the MDD group, and the remaining
# belong to the control group

# For simplicity, we'll just correlate these scores with the metabolite concentrations
# across all subjects

# Add the simulated depression scores to our dataset
df_metabolites['DepressionScore'] = depression_scores

# Perform correlation analysis between metabolite concentrations and depression
# scores

correlation_coef, p_value_corr = np.corrcoef(df_metabolites['Concentration'],
df_metabolites['DepressionScore'])[0, 1], 0

# Visualize the relationship between metabolite concentrations and depression
# scores

plt.figure(figsize=(8, 6))

sns.scatterplot(x='DepressionScore', y='Concentration', data=df_metabolites,
```

```
hue='Group')

plt.title('Correlation Between Metabolite Concentrations and Depression Scores')
plt.xlabel('Depression Score')
plt.ylabel('Metabolite Concentration (Arbitrary Units)')
plt.tight_layout()

# Display the correlation coefficient
correlation_coef
```

5.4 Result and Interpretation

5.4.1 Correlation Analysis Results:

The correlation coefficient between metabolite concentrations and hypothetical depression scores in our simulated dataset is approximately -0.012. This indicates a very weak and essentially negligible linear relationship between metabolite concentrations and depression severity scores across all subjects, without distinguishing between MDD and control groups.

5.4.2 Data Visualization:

The scatter plot visualizes the relationship between metabolite concentrations and depression scores, with different colors representing the MDD and control groups. The plot does not show a clear pattern or trend, consistent with the very low correlation coefficient obtained.

5.4.3 Interpretation:

In this simulated example, there is no significant correlation between metabolite concentrations and depression severity scores. However, in a real dataset, such analysis could reveal important relationships that might help in understanding the biological underpinnings of MDD and in identifying potential biomarkers for the severity of depression.

Table 3: Demographic and clinical characteristics of participants.

Variables	MDD-A	MDD-T	HCs	p value			
Sample size	35	20	100	MD D- HCs	MDD A- MDD T	MDD A- HCs	MDD T- HCs
Sex (male/female)	10/25	4/16	39/61	0.11 2	0.539 2	0.31	0.130
Age(year)	25.86±7 .84	24.95±8 .94	25.08±9 .00	0.62	0.60	0.47	0.93
BMI	20.10±2 .58	21.86±3 .12	21.09±2 .73	0.49	0.11	0.16	0.67
HAMD	22.17±5 .49	20.40±5 .43	-	-	0.25	-	-
HAMA	18.60±4 .65	9.50±2. 84	-	-	8.2E- 10	-	-

HCs healthy controls, MDD major depressive disorder, MDD-A major depressive disorder patients with anxiety disorder, MDD-T major depressive disorder patients without anxiety symptoms, HAMD Hamilton Depression Rating Scale, HAMA Hamilton anxiety Rating Scale, BMI body mass index

This table provides demographic and clinical characteristics of participants in a study of Major Depressive Disorder (MDD). It includes data on age, sex, BMI, and clinical scales like the Hamilton Depression Rating Scale (HAMD) and Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HAMA) across three groups: MDD patients with anxiety (MDD-A), MDD patients without anxiety (MDD-T), and healthy controls (HCs).

Table 4: List of endogenous metabolites (1).

metabolites	metabolites	metabolites	metabolites	metabolites
4-Nitrophenol	Docosaehexaenoic acid	Deoxycholic acid	3-Hydroxysebacic acid	19-Nortestosterone
Methylimidazole acetic acid	2-Mercaptobenzothiazole	N-Acetyl-L-histidine	Azelaic acid	3-Hydroxyvaleric acid
L-Glutamic acid	Gly-Leu	fMet	Hydrocinnamic acid	Kahweol
L-Tyrosine	Tripropionin	4-Methoxycinnamaldehyde	DL-Tryptophan	Palmitoylcarnitine
Dihydrothymine	cis-2-Decenoic acid	N-Acetylcadaverine	Phenylacetylglutamine	4-Hydroxybenzaldehyde
Lauric acid	18-HETE	5-Aminovaleric acid	D-Proline	4-Hydroxyhippuric acid
Vanillin	Indole-3-lactic acid	4-Ethylbenzaldehyde	Diphenol glucuronide	Androsterone glucuronide
1-Naphthol	N2, N2-Dimethylguanosine	4-Methoxycinnamic acid	Veratrole	2-Furoic acid

Panaxytriol	Glycodeoxycholic acid	Glycocholic acid	Cortisone	4-Pyridoxic acid
2-Hydroxycinnamic acid	Paracetamol	4-Trifluoromethylphenol	D-Malic acid	Pyrogallol
Tetradecanedioic acid	4-Phenyl-3-buten-2-one	Undecanoic acid	Hexanoylcarnitine	3-Acetyl-2,5-dimethylfuran
3-Phenyllactic acid	Trifluoroacetic acid	Albendazole sulfoxide	Allantoic acid	p-Cresylsulfate
Glycoursodeoxycholic acid	Dihydropteroic acid	Indole-3-propionic acid	Homoarginine	3-Indoleacetonitrile
Prostaglandin E1	Docosapentaenoic acid	1-Methyluric acid	Indole-3-acetic acid	Isophorone
L-Kynurenine	Theobromine	Alanyltyrosine	4-Methylphenol	1,7-Dimethyluric acid
Adenine	Sphingosine 1-phosphate	O-Desmethylenlafaxine	Hippuric acid	5-Hydroxytryptophan
Jasmonic acid	gamma-Glu-Gly	Normorphine	1-Methylxanthine	Estrone sulfate
Ornithine	Cafestol	Caffeine	N-Cinnamoylglycine	Monobutyl phthalate
Indole-3-butyric acid	Formylkynurenine	3-Methyladipic acid	beta-Hydroxymyristic acid	Testosterone
Citric acid	Tetrahydrocortisone	Vanillyl alcohol	Tiglic acid	Testosterone sulfate
2-Methoxyestradiol	N-Acetyl-L-glutamine	Piperine	MG (16:1)	Cytosine
Paliperidone	Creatinine	Capryloylglycine	Celastrol	L-Pyroglutamic acid

Skatole	Cortisol	D-Maltose	12-Hydroxydodecanoic acid	Phenobarbital
Cholic acid	Prostaglandin B1	Haplopine	3-Hydroxyisoheptanoic acid	Indolyl-3-acryloylglycine
Docosatrienoic acid	5-Sulfosalicylic acid	Hexadecanedioic acid	Levothyroxine	Corchorifatty acid F
4-Phenylbutyric acid	Retinoic acid	Betaine	gamma-Glu-gln	L-Norleucine
1,5-Anhydro-D-glucitol	Diphenylamine	Tetrahydrocurcumin	Propionylcarnitine	3-Methoxybenzaldehyde
Threonic acid	Pyruvic acid	Ketoleucine	Picolinic acid	N4-Acetylcytidine
Nicotinuric acid	N-Desmethylenlafaxine	Oleamide	Cyclohexylamine	2-Oxobutyric acid
Acrylic acid	Acetyl-L-carnitine	Tyrosine	Calcitriol	Coenzyme Q1
N-Desmethyldiamine	Uric acid	P-Cresol glucuronide	3-Hydroxydecanoic acid	D-Erythrose 4-phosphate
N-Acetyltryptophan	Androstenedione	Pipecolic acid	Desoxycortone	Pentadecanoic acid
Trigonelline	Monoolein	Benzylsuccinic acid	10-Hydroxycarbazine	Mevalonolactone
Decanoylcarnitine	Eicosapentaenoic acid	Arachidonic acid	Proline	3-Indoxyl sulphate
Mycophenolic acid	Creatine	Asp-His	1-Methylhistidine	Isobutyric acid

LPA (18:0)	cystine	cis,cis-Muconic acid	Palmitoleic acid	4-Methoxybenzaldehyde
L-Saccharopine	N, N-Dimethylsphingosine	L-5-Hydroxytryptophan	Dihydrokawain	2,6-Xylidine
Tridecylic acid	Theophylline	Propylparaben	Perindoprilat	LPA (18:0)
Corticosterone	Paraxanthine	Quebrachamine	Decanoic acid	Sulcatone
Avocadyne 1-acetate	Hypoxanthine	Cyclamic acid	Methyl indole-3-acetate	Glutamine
LysoPC(22:5(7Z, 10Z,13Z,16Z,19Z))	2-Methyl-5-acetonyl-7-hydroxychromone	3-Hydroxy-3-methylbutanoic acid	4-Hydroxy-3-methoxymandelic acid	1,5-Dihydroxy-3,4-dimethoxy-10-methyl-9(10H)-acridinone
8Z,11Z,14Z-Eicosatrienoic acid	Eicosapentaenoic acid ethyl ester	Taurochenodeoxycholic acid	meta-O-Dealkylated flecainide lactam	2-Isopropylmalic acid
5'-S-Methyl-5'-thioadenosine	N6, N6, N6-Trimethyl-L-lysine	16-Hydroxyhexadecanoic acid	Leukotriene B4 Ethanolamide	2,6-Di-tert-butyl-1,4-benzoquinone
Thymidine 5'-monophosphate	11H-Benzo[a]fluorene-11-ylacetic acid	2'-Deoxyinosine 5'-monophosphate	Taurolithocholic acid 3-sulfate	Carbamazepine 10,11-epoxide
O-methoxycatechol-O-sulphate	5-Hydroxyindole-3-acetic acid	Arachidonic acid methyl ester		

Results: Metabolites which were hit in those pathways correlated with depressive and anxiety symptoms. Altogether, 17 metabolic pathways were enriched in MDD patients, and 23 metabolites were hit in those pathways. Three metabolic pathways were enriched in MDD patients without anxiety, including glycine and serine metabolism, arginine and proline metabolism, and phenylalanine and tyrosine metabolism. In addition, L-glutamic acid was positively correlated with the severity of depression and retardation if hit in MDD patients without anxiety symptoms.

Conclusions: Different kinds of metabolic pathophysiological processes were found in MDD patients. Disorder of glycine and serine metabolism was observed in both MDD patients with anxiety and those without.

Table 5: List of endogenous metabolites (2).

metabolites	metabolites	metabolites	metabolites	metabolites
4-Nitrophenol	Docosahexaenoic acid	Deoxycholic acid	3-Hydroxysebacic acid	19-Nortestosterone
Methylimidazole acetic acid	2-Mercaptobenzothiazole	N-Acetyl-L-histidine	Azelaic acid	3-Hydroxyvaleric acid
L-Glutamic acid	Gly-Leu	fMet	Hydrocinnamic acid	Kahweol
L-Tyrosine	Tripropionin	4-Methoxycinnamaldehyde	DL-Tryptophan	Palmitoylcarnitine

Dihydrothymine	cis-2-Decenoic acid	N-Acetylcadaverine	Phenylacetylglutamine	4-Hydroxybenzaldehyde
Lauric acid	18-HETE	5-Aminovaleric acid	D-Proline	4-Hydroxyhippuric acid
Vanillin	Indole-3-lactic acid	4-Ethylbenzaldehyde	Diphenol glucuronide	Androsterone glucuronide
1-Naphthol	N2, N2-Dimethylguanosine	4-Methoxycinnamic acid	Veratrole	2-Furoic acid
Panaxxytriol	Glycodeoxycholic acid	Glycocholic acid	Cortisone	4-Pyridoxic acid
2-Hydroxycinnamic acid	Paracetamol	4-Trifluoromethylphenol	D-Malic acid	Pyrogallol
Tetradecanedioic acid	4-Phenyl-3-buten-2-one	Undecanoic acid	Hexanoylcarnitine	3-Acetyl-2,5-dimethylfuran
3-Phenyllactic acid	Trifluoroacetic acid	Albendazole sulfoxide	Allantoic acid	p-Cresylsulfate
Glycoursodeoxycholic acid	Dihydropteroic acid	Indole-3-propionic acid	Homoarginine	3-Indoleacetonitrile
Prostaglandin E1	Docosapentaenoic acid	1-Methyluric acid	Indole-3-acetic acid	Isophorone
L-Kynurenine	Theobromine	Alanyltyrosine	4-Methylphenol	1,7-Dimethyluric acid
Adenine	Sphingosine 1-phosphate	O-Desmethylvenlafaxine	Hippuric acid	5-Hydroxytryptophan

Jasmonic acid	gamma-Glu-Gly	Normorphine	1-Methylxanthine	Estrone sulfate
Ornithine	Cafestol	Caffeine	N-Cinnamoylglycine	Monobutyl phthalate
Indole-3-butyric acid	Formylkynurenine	3-Methyladipic acid	beta-Hydroxymyristic acid	Testosterone
Citric acid	Tetrahydrocortisone	Vanillyl alcohol	Tiglic acid	Testosterone sulfate
2-Methoxyestradiol	N-Acetyl-L-glutamine	Piperine	MG (16:1)	Cytosine
Paliperidone	Creatinine	Capryloylglycine	Celastrol	L-Pyroglutamic acid
Skatole	Cortisol	D-Maltose	12-Hydroxydodecanoic acid	Phenobarbital
Cholic acid	Prostaglandin B1	Haplopine	3-Hydroxyisoheptanoic acid	Indolyl-3-acryloylglycine
Docosatrienoic acid	5-Sulfosalicylic acid	Hexadecanedioic acid	Levothyroxine	Corchorifatty acid F
4-Phenylbutyric acid	Retinoic acid	Betaine	gamma-Glu-gln	L-Norleucine
1,5-Anhydro-D-glucitol	Diphenylamine	Tetrahydrocurcumin	Propionylcarnitine	3-Methoxybenzaldehyde
Threonic acid	Pyruvic acid	Ketoleucine	Picolinic acid	N4-Acetylcytidine

Nicotinuric acid	N-Desmethylenlafaxine	Oleamide	Cyclohexylamine	2-Oxobutyric acid
Acrylic acid	Acetyl-L-carnitine	Tyrosine	Calcitriol	Coenzyme Q1
N-Desmethyltramadol	Uric acid	P-Cresol glucuronide	3-Hydroxydecanoic acid	D-Erythrose 4-phosphate
N-Acetyltryptophan	Androstenedione	Pipecolic acid	Desoxycortone	Pentadecanoic acid
Trigonelline	Monoolein	Benzylsuccinic acid	10-Hydroxycarbazine	Mevalonolactone
Decanoylcarnitine	Eicosapentaenoic acid	Arachidonic acid	Proline	3-Indoxyl sulphate
Mycophenolic acid	Creatine	Asp-His	1-Methylhistidine	Isobutyric acid
LPA (18:0)	cystine	cis,cis-Muconic acid	Palmitoleic acid	4-Methoxybenzaldehyde
L-Saccharopine	N, N-Dimethylsphingosine	L-5-Hydroxytryptophan	Dihydrokawain	2,6-Xylidine
Tridecylic acid	Theophylline	Propylparaben	Perindoprilat	LPA (18:0)
Corticosterone	Paraxanthine	Quebrachamine	Decanoic acid	Sulcatone
Avocadyne 1-acetate	Hypoxanthine	Cyclamic acid	Methyl indole-3-acetate	Glutamine

LysoPC(22:5(7Z, 10Z,13Z,16Z,19 Z))	2-Methyl-5-acetonyl-7-hydroxychromone	3-Hydroxy-3-methylbutanoic acid	4-Hydroxy-3-methoxymandelic acid	1,5-Dihydroxy-3,4-dimethoxy-10-methyl-9(10H)-acridinone
8Z,11Z,14Z-Eicosatrienoic acid	Eicosapentaenoic acid ethyl ester	Taurochenodeoxycholic acid	meta-O-Dealkylated flecainide lactam	2-Isopropylmalic acid
5'-S-Methyl-5'-thioadenosine	N6, N6, N6-Trimethyl-L-lysine	16-Hydroxyhexadecanoic acid	Leukotriene B4 Ethanolamide	2,6-Di-tert-butyl-1,4-benzoquinone
Thymidine 5'-monophosphate	11H-Benzo[a]fluorene-11-ylacetic acid	2'-Deoxyinosine 5'-monophosphate	Taurolithocholic acid 3-sulfate	Carbamazepine 10,11-epoxide
O-methoxycatechol-O-sulphate	5-Hydroxyindole-3-acetic acid	Arachidonic acid methyl ester		

Provides a comprehensive list of endogenous metabolites identified in the study, covering a wide range of biochemical classes and functions, likely serving as a reference or raw data for further analysis of metabolic changes associated with MDD

Table 6: Differential metabolic pathways enriched from different groups.

A

Metabolite Set	Total	Hits	Details	Holm P
Ammonia Recycling	32	3	L-glutamic acid; pyruvic acid; glutamine;	1.16E-04
Amino Sugar Metabolism	33	3	L-glutamic acid; pyruvic acid; glutamine;	1.16E-04
Glutamate Metabolism	49	3	L-glutamic acid; pyruvic acid; glutamine;	1.16E-04
Urea Cycle	29	4	L-glutamic acid; pyruvic acid; glutamine; ornithine;	2.95E-04
Pyrimidine Metabolism	59	3	dihydrothymine; L-glutamine; thymidine 5'-monophosphate;	9.75E-04
Warburg Effect	58	5	L-glutamic acid; pyruvic acid; glutamine; citric acid; D-erythrose 4-phosphate;	0.001
Phenylacetate Metabolism	9	2	glutamine; phenylacetyl glutamine;	0.003
Nicotinate and Nicotinamide Metabolism	37	2	L-glutamic acid; glutamine;	0.004
Aspartate Metabolism	35	2	L-glutamic acid; glutamine;	0.004
Purine Metabolism	74	5	adenine; L-glutamic acid; hypoxanthine; uric acid; glutamine;	0.008
Fatty Acid Biosynthesis	35	4	lauric acid; decanoic acid; cis-2-decenoic acid; beta-hydroxy-myristic acid;	0.02
Glycine and Serine Metabolism	59	6	2-oxobutyric acid; betaine; creatine; L-glutamic acid; ornithine; pyruvic acid;	0.04
Methionine Metabolism	43	3	2-oxobutyric acid; betaine; 5'-S-Methyl-5-thioadenosine	0.04

B

Metabolite Set	Total	Hits	Details	Holm P
Glycine and Serine Metabolism	59	6	2-oxobutyric; betaine; creatine; L-glutamic acid; ornithine; pyruvic acid;	0.004
Arginine and Proline Metabolism	53	5	creatine; L-glutamic acid; L-proline; ornithine; D-proline;	0.03
Phenylalanine and Tyrosine Metabolism	28	2	L-glutamic acid; tyrosine	0.05

Total the total number of metabolites that can be hits in the pathway from MSEA, Hits the total number of metabolites that hits in certain pathway, Details the metabolites in our data that hits in the pathway, Holm P p-value after Holm-Bonferroni adjusting. A. metabolic pathways enriched from MDD with anxiety symptoms with holm P below 0.05; B. metabolic pathways enriched from MDD without anxiety symptoms with holm P below 0.05.

This table outlines different metabolic pathways that are enriched in MDD patients, again separated into those with and without anxiety symptoms. It provides details on the number of hits and specific metabolites involved in these pathways, with Holm-Bonferroni adjusted p-values to show statistical significance.

Table 7: Differential metabolites hit in differential pathways.

A

metabolites	P-value	Fold Change	VIP-value
<i>Amino acids</i>			
L-glutamic acid	0.43	1.03	0.87
ornithine	0.99	0.98	0.39
phenylacetylglutamine	0.29	1.05	0.84
glutamine	1.38E-05	0.79	1.72
<i>Nucleobases</i>			
dihydrothymine	0.01	1.15	0.96
adenine	0.002	0.79	1.28
hypoxanthine	0.93	0.92	0.35
5'-S-Methyl-5'-thioadenosine	0.002	0.79	1.23
thymidine 5'-monophosphate	0.43	0.38	0.27
<i>Other components</i>			
citric acid	0.82	0.99	0.37
cis-2-decenoic acid	2.81E-04	0.63	1.83
beta-hydroxymyristic acid	0.01	1.15	1.09
pyruvic acid	0.009	0.83	1.57
uric acid	0.46	1.03	0.27
creatine	0.78	1.00	0.79
2-Oxobutyric acid	0.001	1.22	1.37
betaine	0.009	0.85	0.40
D-erythrose 4-phosphate	0.006	0.70	1.31
decanoic acid	0.25	0.93	0.42

B

metabolites	P-value	Fold Change	VIP-value
<i>Amino acids</i>			
L-glutamic acid	0.04	1.25	0.87
ornithine	0.62	0.92	0.39
tyrosine	0.98	0.69	0.24
D-proline	0.27	1.19	1.21
proline	0.42	0.94	0.78
<i>Other components</i>			
pyruvic acid	0.03	0.86	1.57
creatine	0.003	0.66	0.79
2-oxobutyric acid	0.03	1.12	1.37
betaine	0.94	1.06	0.40

P-values were derived from non-parametric Mann–Whitney U-test; Fold Change indicated higher or lower levels in patients; VIP-value (Variable Importance in the Projection) described the overall contribution of each metabolites to the PLS-DA model in component 1. A. metabolites hit in the differential pathways of MDD with anxiety symptoms; B. metabolites hit in the differential pathways of MDD without anxiety symptoms

A list of metabolites affected in different pathways in MDD patients, divided into those with and without anxiety symptoms. It includes statistical metrics like p-values, fold changes, and Variable Importance in Projection (VIP) values, helping to pinpoint the most influential metabolites in the study.

5.5 Key Findings and Interpretations:

5.5.1 Metabolic Pathway Involvement:

- *Common Pathways in MDD:* Disorders in glycine and serine metabolism are observed across both subsets of MDD patients, indicating a potential central role in the pathophysiology of MDD.
- *Specific Pathways in Subgroups:*
 - Without Anxiety: There is an enrichment of pathways involved in arginine and proline metabolism, and phenylalanine and tyrosine metabolism.
 - With Anxiety: Pathways like ammonia recycling, amino sugar metabolism, and glutamate metabolism are distinctly enriched.

5.5.2 Differential Metabolites:

- Several metabolites were identified that vary significantly between MDD patients and healthy controls, and between MDD patients with and without anxiety symptoms. Notably, metabolites like L-glutamic acid, pyruvic acid, and glutamine appear frequently across multiple pathways, underscoring their potential importance in the disease mechanism.
- Metabolites like cis-2-decenoic acid and 2-Oxobutyric acid showed substantial changes in their levels, indicating their potential as biomarkers or therapeutic targets.

5.5.3 Novel Insights from Metabolomic Analysis:

- *Correlation with Clinical Features:* L-glutamic acid's correlation with the severity of depression highlights the role of amino acid neurotransmitters in MDD, specifically how they might influence mood and cognitive functions through neurotransmitter pathways.

- *Potential for Biomarker Development:* The distinct metabolomic profiles observed could assist in developing specific biomarkers for MDD subtypes, potentially aiding in more personalized therapeutic interventions.

5.5.4 Statistical Analysis Strengths: The use of principal component analysis (PCA) and partial least squares-discriminant analysis (PLS-DA) strengthens the reliability of the metabolomic data by confirming the reproducibility and discriminative power of the metabolic profiling.

5.6 Implications for Research and Therapy:

- **Research:** These findings can guide future research to explore targeted therapies that address these specific metabolic dysfunctions.
- **Therapy:** Understanding these metabolic pathways might help in designing interventions that can modify these pathways to alleviate symptoms or potentially modify the course of MDD.

FIGURE 4 : Sensitivity analyses according to analytic techniques

Metabolites	Analytic technique	No. of comparisons	SMD (95% CI)	p-Value^a (overall)	I²	p-Value^b (heterogeneity)
1-Methylhistidine	MS	4	-0.33 (-1.01 to 0.35)	0.342	85.7%	<0.001
25-Hydroxyvitamin D	MS	3	-0.29 (-0.39 to -0.18)	<0.001	0.0%	0.811
2-Hydroxybutyric acid	MS	3	1.02 (0.69 to 1.36)	<0.001	0.0%	0.652
3-Aminoisobutanoic acid	MS	4	-0.06 (-1.03 to 0.92)	0.911	93.0%	<0.001
3-Hydroxybutyric acid	MS	3	0.02 (-0.67 to 0.72)	0.952	76.8%	0.013
4-Hydroxyproline	MS	5	-0.16 (-0.97 to 0.65)	0.701	90.3%	<0.001
5-Hydroxylysine	MS	3	0.73 (-1.22 to 2.68)	0.464	97.3%	<0.001
Adenosine diphosphate	MS	3	2.01 (-1.20 to 5.22)	0.220	98.0%	<0.001
Aminoadipic acid	MS	5	1.15 (-0.22 to 2.51)	0.100	96.4%	<0.001
Arachidonic acid	MS	3	-0.52 (-1.42 to 0.37)	0.253	84.4%	0.002
Asymmetric dimethylarginine	MS	4	2.52 (0.68 to 4.36)	0.007	97.9%	<0.001
beta-Alanine	MS	5	-0.02 (-0.47 to 0.43)	0.944	70.5%	0.009
Betaine	MS	4	0.26 (-0.99 to 1.51)	0.679	95.3%	<0.001
Capric acid	MS	4	-1.31 (-2.65 to 0.03)	0.056	95.6%	<0.001
Cholesterol	MS	...	...	...	...	...
Choline	MS	3	1.18 (-0.94 to 3.30)	0.276	96.6%	<0.001
cis-Aconitic acid	MS	3	1.42 (-1.50 to 4.35)	0.341	97.9%	<0.001
Citric acid	MS	4	-1.03 (-2.54 to 0.48)	0.181	94.4%	<0.001
Citrulline	MS	8	0.18 (-0.31 to 0.68)	0.466	89.3%	<0.001
Creatine	MS	4	-0.87 (-2.09 to 0.35)	0.163	94.7%	<0.001
Creatinine	MS	4	-2.10 (-3.87 to -0.33)	0.020	96.7%	<0.001
Deoxycholic acid	MS	3	-0.17 (-0.60 to 0.25)	0.427	61.1%	0.076
Dimethylglycine	MS	3	1.18 (-1.08 to 3.44)	0.305	97.0%	<0.001
Dodecanoic acid	MS	4	-0.73 (-0.99 to -0.48)	<0.001	0.0%	0.544
Ethanolamine	MS	5	-0.94 (-2.84 to 0.97)	0.336	98.1%	<0.001
Gamma-Aminobutyric acid	MS	7	0.81 (-0.17 to 1.79)	0.104	94.5%	<0.001
Gluconic acid	MS	3	-0.27 (-0.58 to 0.05)	0.099	0.0%	0.793
Glyceric acid	MS	4	1.29 (-0.76 to 3.35)	0.217	97.1%	<0.001
Glycine	MS	7	-0.87 (-1.88 to 0.13)	0.088	95.6%	<0.001
Glycoursodeoxycholic acid	MS	3	0.19 (-0.19 to 0.58)	0.327	53.5%	0.116
Homovanillic acid	MS	3	1.36 (-0.80 to 3.52)	0.216	97.8%	<0.001
Hydroxykynurenine	MS	6	0.03 (-0.19 to 0.25)	0.804	37.7%	0.155
Hypoxanthine	MS	6	-0.70 (-1.21 to -0.18)	0.009	85.9%	<0.001
Indoleacetic acid	MS	3	1.49 (-1.03 to 4.00)	0.247	97.6%	<0.001
Isocitric acid	MS	4	1.06 (-0.98 to 3.10)	0.308	97.4%	<0.001
Kynurenic acid	MS	13	-0.42 (-0.52 to -0.31)	<0.001	1.2%	0.434
L-Acetylcarnitine	MS	3	-2.06 (-3.58 to -0.54)	0.008	95.4%	<0.001
L-Alanine	MS	7	-0.70 (-1.64 to 0.25)	0.148	95.1%	<0.001
L-alpha-Aminobutyric acid	MS	3	0.17 (-0.40 to 0.73)	0.563	77.4%	0.012
L-Arginine	MS	9	-0.01 (-0.73 to 0.70)	0.970	95.2%	<0.001
L-Asparagine	MS	6	-1.33 (-2.45 to -0.21)	0.020	95.7%	<0.001

L-Aspartic acid	MS	7	0.09 (-0.53 to 0.72)	0.771	90.0%	<0.001
L-Carnitine	MS	3	-0.40 (-1.18 to 0.37)	0.308	88.2%	<0.001
L-Cystine	MS	3	0.25 (-2.70 to 3.20)	0.870	98.5%	<0.001
L-Glutamic acid	MS	7	0.06 (-0.73 to 0.86)	0.873	94.1%	<0.001
L-Glutamine	MS	7	-1.46 (-2.55 to -0.36)	0.009	96.4%	<0.001
L-Histidine	MS	6	0.15 (-0.60 to 0.89)	0.697	91.7%	<0.001
Linoleic acid	MS	5	-0.99 (-1.46 to -0.51)	<0.001	63.4%	0.027
L-Isoleucine	MS	6	-0.60 (-1.61 to 0.41)	0.242	95.1%	<0.001
L-Kynurenine	MS	18	-0.17 (-0.36 to 0.02)	0.077	81.9%	<0.001
L-Lactic acid	MS	4	-0.34 (-1.53 to 0.85)	0.571	94.1%	<0.001
L-Leucine	MS	7	-0.04 (-0.22 to 0.15)	0.682	0.0%	0.452
L-Lysine	MS	6	-1.03 (-2.10 to 0.04)	0.059	95.4%	<0.001
L-Malic acid	MS	3	0.87 (-0.57 to 2.31)	0.235	93.7%	<0.001
L-Methionine	MS	8	-0.73 (-1.40 to -0.06)	0.032	93.4%	<0.001
L-Phenylalanine	MS	7	0.68 (-0.08 to 1.44)	0.079	93.4%	<0.001
L-Proline	MS	6	-0.35 (-1.40 to 0.70)	0.510	94.9%	<0.001
L-Serine	MS	8	-0.90 (-1.73 to -0.07)	0.034	94.5%	<0.001
L-Threonine	MS	8	-0.64 (-1.36 to 0.09)	0.085	93.1%	<0.001
L-Tryptophan	MS	26	-0.46 (-0.66 to -0.26)	<0.001	87.8%	<0.001
L-Tyrosine	MS	7	-0.25 (-0.65 to 0.16)	0.236	79.0%	<0.001
L-Valine	MS	7	-0.76 (-1.66 to 0.15)	0.101	94.8%	<0.001
Myo-inositol	MS	...	...	...	...	...
Oleic acid	MS	5	-0.84 (-1.31 to -0.36)	0.001	63.6%	0.027
O-Phosphoethanolamine	MS	4	-0.21 (-0.75 to 0.33)	0.448	78.3%	0.003
Ornithine	MS	8	-0.31 (-0.78 to 0.17)	0.205	89.1%	<0.001
Palmitic acid	MS	4	-0.69 (-1.23 to -0.16)	0.011	71.2%	0.015
Palmitoleic acid	MS	3	-0.90 (-1.70 to -0.10)	0.027	79.8%	0.007
Phosphatidylcholine (32:0)	MS	3	0.08 (-0.51 to 0.66)	0.799	80.6%	0.006
Phosphatidylcholine (32:1)	MS	3	0.56 (0.32 to 0.80)	<0.001	0.0%	0.482
Phosphatidylethanolamine (34:2)	MS	3	0.38 (-0.12 to 0.87)	0.136	73.0%	0.025
Pyroglutamic acid	MS	5	-0.64 (-1.76 to 0.49)	0.267	95.1%	<0.001
Pyruvic acid	MS	...	...	...	...	...
Quinolinic acid	MS	10	-0.06 (-0.32 to 0.20)	0.660	69.7%	<0.001
Sarcosine	MS	4	-0.20 (-0.95 to 0.55)	0.602	86.5%	<0.001
Serotonin	MS	5	-0.26 (-0.76 to 0.23)	0.301	77.9%	0.001
Stearic acid	MS	3	-0.42 (-1.00 to 0.16)	0.152	47.7%	0.148
Succinic acid	MS	4	0.69 (-0.35 to 1.74)	0.194	94.4%	<0.001
Symmetric dimethylarginine	MS	3	1.05 (-0.75 to 2.84)	0.253	97.7%	<0.001
Taurine	MS	5	-0.33 (-0.73 to 0.07)	0.110	71.7%	0.007
Taurochenodesoxycholic acid	MS	4	0.33 (0.11 to 0.54)	0.003	0.0%	0.446
Tyramine	MS	3	1.12 (0.70 to 1.55)	<0.001	58.8%	0.089
Urea	MS	3	-2.11 (-4.59 to 0.38)	0.097	97.9%	<0.001

CI confidence interval, SMD standardized mean differences

*p-Value for between-group effect sizes

Contains sensitivity analyses based on analytical techniques showing differences in metabolite levels, which can aid in understanding how the results might vary with different methods of analysis.

FIGURE 5: Meta regeneration analyses of metabolites in the blood

Supplementary Table 6 Meta-regression analyses of metabolites in the blood, comparing MDD patients and controls			
Variables	No. of Comparisons	Slope (95% CI)	p-Value^a
Kynurenic acid			
Sample size	13	0.000 (−0.001 to 0.001)	0.985
Proportion of females	12	0.607 (−0.381 to 1.595)	0.201
Mean age	12	0.002 (−0.007 to 0.011)	0.665
L-Kynurenine			
Sample size	18	0.000 (−0.001 to 0.001)	0.972
Proportion of females	16	−1.288 (−4.166 to 1.591)	0.354
Mean age	16	0.000 (−0.044 to 0.044)	0.993
Disease severity	11	−0.013 (−0.056 to 0.031)	0.525
L-Tryptophan			
Sample size	26	0.000 (0.000 to 0.001)	0.527
Proportion of females	23	2.097 (−0.759 to 4.952)	0.142
Mean age	24	0.005 (−0.032 to 0.043)	0.770
Disease severity	18	−0.040 (−0.076 to −0.005)	0.029
Quinolinic acid			
Sample size	10	0.003 (−0.006 to 0.012)	0.521
<i>CI</i> confidence interval			
^a p-Value for meta-regression analysis			

Provides meta-regression analyses of metabolites comparing MDD patients and controls, including results for metabolites like kynurenic acid, L-kynurenine, and others, offering insights into how these levels differ statistically between groups.

FIGURE 6: Altered metabolic pathways in the blood of patients with MDD

Supplemental Table 7 Altered metabolic pathways in the blood of patients with MDD, according to antidepressant exposure	
Metabolic pathways	p-Value ^a
Antidepressant-free major depressive disorder	
Aminoacyl-tRNA biosynthesis	<0.001
Nitrogen metabolism	<0.001
Tryptophan metabolism	0.002
Synthesis and degradation of ketone bodies	0.022
Arginine and proline metabolism	0.031
Antidepressant-treated major depressive disorder	
Aminoacyl-tRNA biosynthesis	<0.001
Nitrogen metabolism	<0.001
Cyanoamino acid metabolism	<0.001
Glycine, serine and threonine metabolism	<0.001
Purine metabolism	0.002
Alanine, aspartate and glutamate metabolism	0.002
Methane metabolism	0.004
Tryptophan metabolism	0.020
D-Glutamine and D-glutamate metabolism	0.032
^a p-Values were calculated from hypergeometric tests in MetaboAnalyst	

Lists altered metabolic pathways in MDD patients' blood according to antidepressant exposure, such as aminoacyl-tRNA biosynthesis and nitrogen metabolism, noting significant differences between patients on antidepressants and those not treated.

FIGURE 7: Significantly altered canonical pathways in the blood of patients with MDD

Supplemental Table 8 Significantly altered canonical pathways in the blood of patients with MDD, according to antidepressant exposure	
Canonical pathways	p-Value ^a
Antidepressant-free major depressive disorder	
tRNA charging	<0.001
Histamine biosynthesis	0.011
Proline degradation	0.027
Taurine biosynthesis	0.032
Antidepressant-treated major depressive disorder	
tRNA charging	<0.001
Glycine biosynthesis I	<0.001
Asparagine biosynthesis I	<0.001
Glutamate receptor signaling	<0.001
dTMP de novo biosynthesis	0.001
Superpathway of serine and glycine biosynthesis I	0.001
Glycine betaine degradation	0.001
Folate polyglutamylation	0.001
5-Aminoimidazole ribonucleotide biosynthesis I	0.002
NAD biosynthesis II (from tryptophan)	0.003
Folate transformations I	0.003
Phenylalanine degradation IV (mammalian, via side chain)	0.003
Purine nucleotides de novo biosynthesis II	0.006
Bupropion degradation	0.008
Asparagine degradation I	0.013
L-Serine degradation	0.013
Glutamine degradation I	0.013
Glycine biosynthesis III	0.017
Phosphatidylethanolamine biosynthesis III	0.017
Glutamine biosynthesis I	0.025
Cysteine biosynthesis/homocysteine degradation	0.025
Glycine biosynthesis II	0.025
Glycine cleavage complex	0.029
Glycine degradation (creatine biosynthesis)	0.029
Threonine degradation II	0.029
Tetrapyrrole biosynthesis II	0.033
Glutathione biosynthesis	0.033
Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis signaling	0.037
Serine biosynthesis	0.037
L-Glutamine biosynthesis II (tRNA-dependent)	0.037
L-Carnitine biosynthesis	0.042
NAD biosynthesis from 2-amino-3-carboxymuconate semialdehyde	0.042
Ceramide biosynthesis	0.042
Tryptophan degradation X (mammalian, via tryptamine)	0.042
Selenocysteine biosynthesis II (archaea and eukaryotes)	0.042

Contains a list of significantly altered canonical pathways in the blood of MDD patients, indicating changes in pathways such as tRNA charging, histamine biosynthesis, and others, differentiated by whether patients were on antidepressants or not.

5.7 Key Insights from Study II Files on MDD:

5.7.1 Altered Metabolic Pathways and Metabolites:

- Study II has highlighted numerous metabolic pathways that are dysregulated in MDD patients. Notably, pathways involving amino acids such as the tryptophan-kynurenine pathway, aminoacyl-tRNA biosynthesis, and fatty acid metabolism are significantly altered. The alterations suggest a strong biochemical basis for MDD that impacts a range of bodily functions.

5.7.2 Influence of Antidepressant Treatment:

- The metabolomic profiles differ significantly between patients who are on antidepressant treatment and those who are not. For instance, patients treated with antidepressants showed alterations in pathways like glycine, serine, and threonine metabolism, and glutamate receptor signaling, which were less pronounced or different in untreated patients.

5.7.3 Potential Biomarkers for MDD:

- Specific metabolites such as L-tryptophan and kynurenic acid consistently show altered levels in MDD patients across various analyses and might serve as biomarkers for diagnosing and monitoring the progress of MDD. Decreased levels of L-tryptophan, in particular, are associated with depression severity, reinforcing its potential utility in clinical evaluations.

5.7.4 Impact of Age and Analytical Techniques:

- Sensitivity analyses indicate that the age of the patients and the analytical techniques used to measure metabolites (like mass spectrometry) can influence the detection and interpretation of metabolomic variations in MDD patients.

5.7.5 Comprehensive Meta-analysis:

- The meta-analysis integrated data from a large number of studies and revealed that metabolomic alterations in MDD are complex and involve a wide array of metabolites and pathways, suggesting that MDD has a broad systemic impact beyond traditional neurotransmitter dysfunctions.

5.7.6 Differential Impacts Based on Biological Samples:

- The metabolomic profiles also vary based on the type of biological sample analyzed (blood, plasma, or serum), highlighting the importance of sample type in metabolomics studies of MDD.

Table 8: Demographic and Clinical Characteristics

Group	Age	Sex	BMI	HAMD Score	HAMA Score
MDD with Anxiety (MDD-A)	Variable	M/F	Variable	Variable	Variable
MDD without Anxiety (MDD-T)	Variable	M/F	Variable	Variable	Variable
Healthy Controls (HC)	Variable	M/F	Variable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

Summarizes participant demographics and clinical assessments to provide context for metabolic findings.

Table 9: Differential Metabolites

Metabolite	p-value	Fold Change	VIP Value
L-glutamic acid	<0.05	High	High
Pyruvic acid	<0.05	Moderate	Medium
Glutamine	<0.05	High	High
cis-2-decenoic acid	<0.01	Very High	Very High
2-Oxobutyric acid	<0.01	High	High

Lists key metabolites that differ between MDD patients and healthy controls, as well as between MDD subtypes (with and without anxiety).

Table 10: Enriched Metabolic Pathways

Pathway	p-value	Hits
Glycine and Serine Metabolism	<0.05	Multiple
Arginine and Proline Metabolism	<0.05	Multiple
Phenylalanine and Tyrosine Metabolism	<0.05	Multiple
Ammonia Recycling	<0.01	Multiple
Amino Sugar Metabolism	<0.01	Multiple
Glutamate Metabolism	<0.05	Multiple

Outlines the metabolic pathways that are enriched or dysregulated in MDD, providing insights into the biochemical basis of the disorder.

Table 11: Metabolomics Research Extensions

Focus	Description
Biomarker Development	Development of specific biomarkers for MDD subtypes to aid in diagnosis and monitoring.
Therapeutic Targets	Targeting altered metabolic pathways for therapeutic intervention.
Personalized Medicine	Tailoring treatment based on individual metabolomic profiles to enhance efficacy.
Preventative Strategies	Early detection of metabolic alterations in at-risk populations for preventative care.

Projects potential extensions of current findings into future research and clinical applications, such as biomarker development or therapeutic targeting.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary:

In this study, we investigated the plasma biosignature and brain metabolic fingerprint in Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) to gain insights into the neurobiological mechanisms underlying the disorder. We analyzed patterns, levels, and correlations of molecules in the bloodstream and brain associated with MDD, including inflammatory markers, neurotrophic factors, hormonal dysregulation, and metabolic alterations. Through integration and interpretation of plasma biomarkers and brain metabolic profiles, we aimed to elucidate the complex interplay between peripheral and central neurobiological processes in depression. Our findings provide valuable insights into the pathophysiology of MDD and may lead to the identification of novel biomarker signatures and therapeutic targets for the disorder.

6.2 Conclusion:

In conclusion, our study highlights the importance of investigating plasma biosignatures and brain metabolic fingerprints in MDD to advance our understanding of the disorder and improve patient outcomes. By integrating data from multiple sources and leveraging advanced analytical techniques, we have identified potential biomarkers and pathways implicated in MDD pathophysiology. These findings pave the way for the development of more precise diagnostic tools, personalized treatment strategies, and targeted interventions for individuals affected by depression. Moving forward, further research is needed to validate and refine these biomarkers, explore longitudinal changes in biosignatures, and translate research findings into clinical practice. Ultimately, our efforts aim to alleviate the burden of MDD and improve the lives of millions of individuals worldwide affected by this debilitating mental health condition.

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