

# Radiation biology, protection and applications

PHYS-450



## Radiation Protection Lectures

Jérôme DAMET, PhD

Institute of radiation physics, Lausanne University Hospital, Switzerland  
University of Otago, Christchurch, New Zealand



La vérification et l'étalonnage des appareils de mesure des radiations ionisantes : deux prestations de radiométrie proposées par l'institut. Pour en savoir plus ...

The Institute of Radiation Physics (IRA) is an affiliated institute of the Department of Radiology at the CHUV. Institute activities are chiefly focused in two disciplines: medical physics, which involves the use of ionizing radiation in medicine, and radiation protection, which deals with methods and practices of protecting both workers and the general population from the effects of ionizing radiation. Within the context of these two disciplines, the institute provides an array of services for, primarily, various departments at the CHUV, as well as for any entity or person working with ionizing radiation in the canton of Vaud. IRA is also responsible for teaching medical physics and radiation protection within the framework of the Department of Medicine at the University of Lausanne.

IRA's main fields of expertise, which correspond to several working groups within the institute, are indicated and explained below.

MEDICAL PHYSICS

- physics of radiation therapy; this group is responsible for providing technical and scientific support in radio-oncology
radio-pharmaceutical chemistry; this group works to support nuclear medicine departments: radiopharmaceutical monitoring, product labeling
medical imaging; this group collaborates with radiodiagnostic departments with respect to image quality and patient protection

RADIATION PROTECTION

- radiation protection; this group provides technical support for any entity or person working with ionizing radiation: individual dosimetry, consulting and certification
radioecology; this group works in close collaboration with the Swiss Federal Office of Public Health to guarantee monitoring of radiation activity levels in the environment by taking soil, grass, milk and other samples

# Radiation Protection Group @ IRA

Jérôme DAMET, PhD

Andreas PITZSCHKE, PhD

Reiner GEYER, PhD

Nicolas CHERBUIN

Camille LEMESRE

Mélanie PATONNIER

Marie NOWAK, PhD student

Siria MEDICI, PhD student (from EPFL, via TP4 and Masters programme)

Valentin BONVIN, PhD student

+ 7 technicians for the dosimetry service (external and internal exposure)

---

At Lausanne University hospital, IRA provides consulting and support services to local RP experts

# Radiation Protection Lectures @ EPFL

## Radiation biology, protection and applications

- 1<sup>st</sup> lecture on 01.10 Basis of radiophysics and Dosimetry
- 2<sup>nd</sup> lecture on 08.10 Dosimetry, radiation measurement and instrumentation
- 3<sup>rd</sup> lecture on 15.10 Radiobiology
- 4<sup>th</sup> lecture on 22.10 Individual dosimetry – External and internal exposures
- 5<sup>th</sup> lecture on 29.10 Operational radiation protection – external exposure
- 6<sup>th</sup> lecture on 05.11 RP physicists in hospitals
- 7<sup>th</sup> shared lecture on 12.11 Waste/Transport and accident management / Start of Pavel's lecture

### fall semester 2018: 2+1:

Monday 09h15-11h00 C Radiation protection & radiation applications

Monday 11h15-12h00 E Radiation protection & radiation applications

What's that?  
Is that dangerous?  
Is that a radioactive waste?

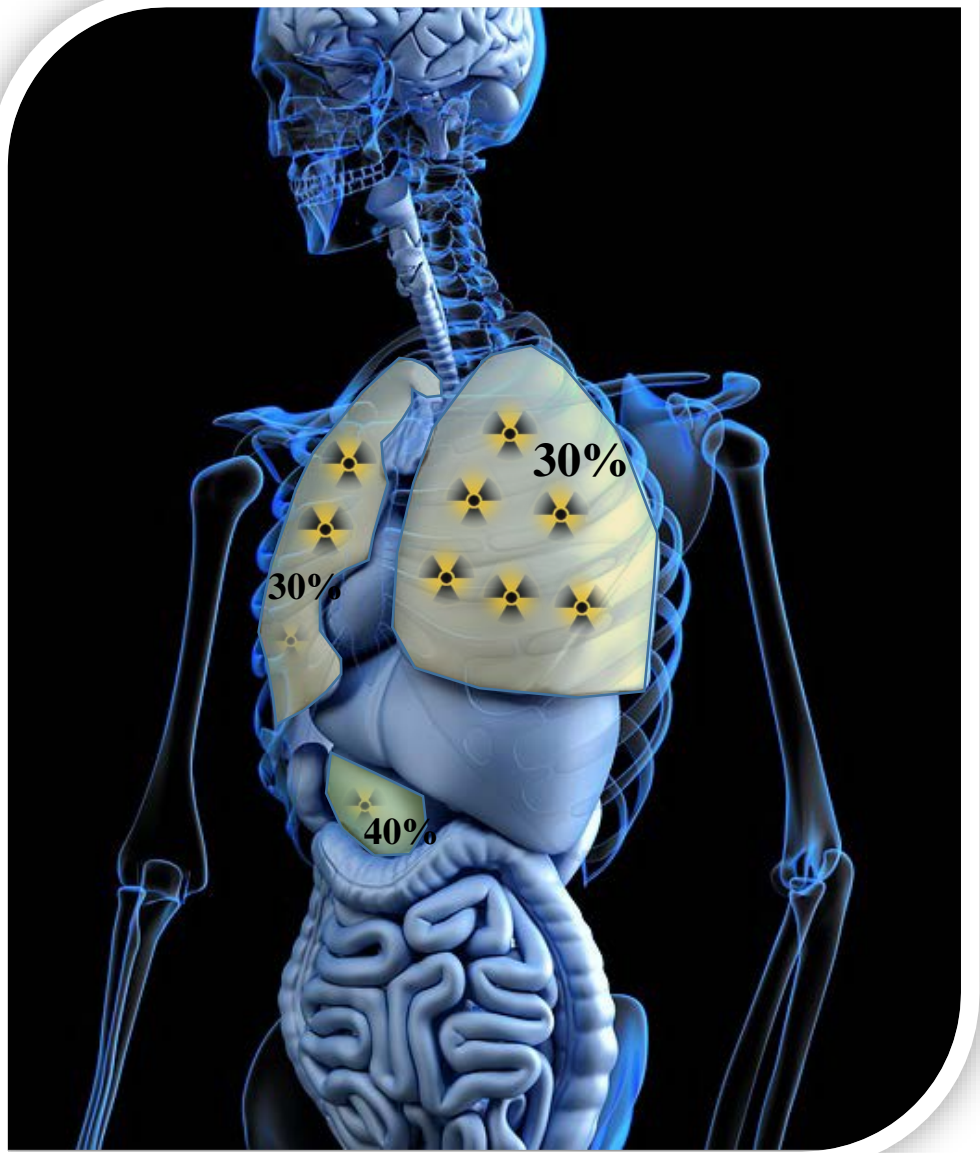
.....



What do you want to measure?  
What does that mean?



What happens if a person incorporate a radioactive substance?



Based on the presentation of

**Prof François Bochud**

Institute of Radiation physics (IRA)

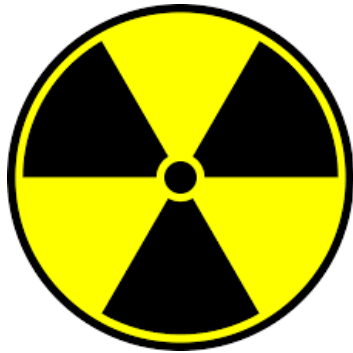
UNIL - CHUV

Master of Science EPF-ETH degree in **Nuclear Engineering**  
RPRA : **Radiation protection** and radiation applications

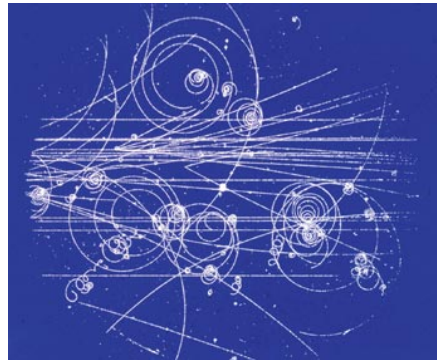
*Basis of radiation physics*  
*1<sup>st</sup> October, 2018*



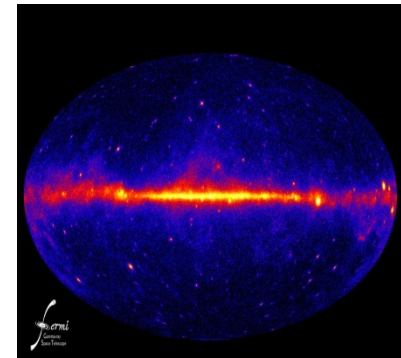
# Overview



Radioactivity



Interaction of  
particles with  
matter



Interaction of  
photons with  
matter

# Objectives



- Become familiar with radiation physics
- Understand the main concepts:
  - Radioactivity and different types of decay
  - Interaction of radiation with matter
    - Useful for Radiobiology, Dosimetry and eventually RP

**Prof François Bochud**

Institute of Radiation physics (IRA)

UNIL - CHUV

Master of Science EPF-ETH degree in **Nuclear Engineering**  
RPRA : **Radiation protection** and radiation applications

*Basis of radiation physics*  
**Radioactivity**

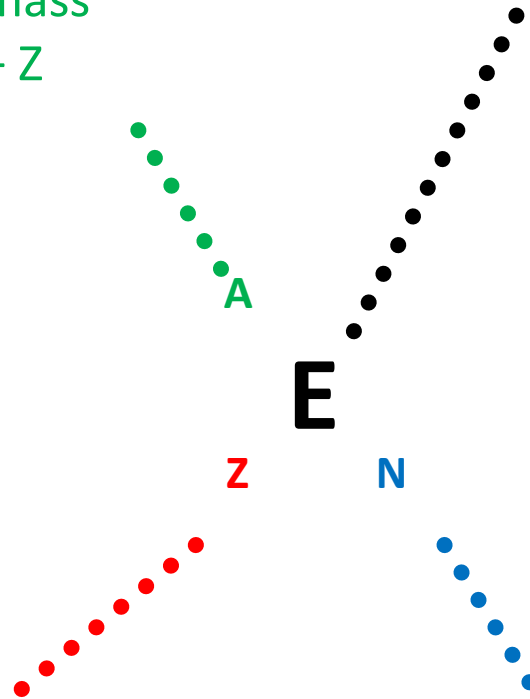
# Nomenclature

## Mass number

characterizes the mass  
of the nucleus:  $N + Z$

## Element

characterized by the  
number of protons  
C = carbon  
i.e.  $Z = 6$  protons



## Number of protons

chemical characteristics of the  
element

## Number of neutrons

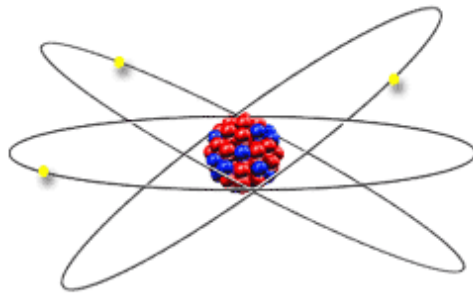
different  $N$  for a given  $Z$   
= isotopes

A  
E  
Z N

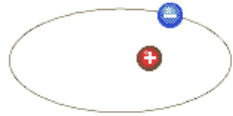
- Why can we write either  ${}^{14}_6\text{C}_8$  or  ${}^{14}\text{C}$
- Element = C  
 $\Rightarrow Z=6$
- Knowing that A equals 14 and Z equals 6  
 $\Rightarrow N=8$

$${}^A_Z\text{E}_N \equiv {}^A\text{E} \equiv \text{E} - A$$

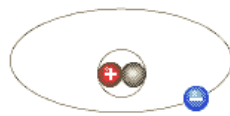
# Isotopes



● Proton    ● Neutron    ● Electron



**H<sub>1</sub>**  
Light Hydrogen  
(Protium)

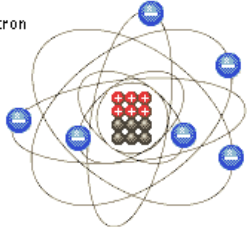


**H<sub>2</sub>**  
"Heavy" Hydrogen  
(Deuterium)

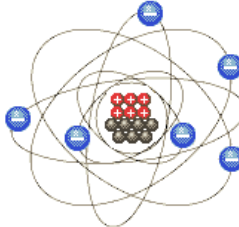


**H<sub>3</sub>**  
Triple-weight Hydrogen  
(Tritium)

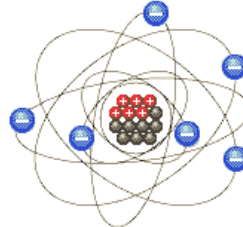
● Electron  
● Proton  
● Neutron



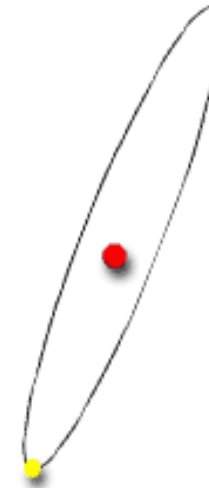
**Carbon 12**  
Stable



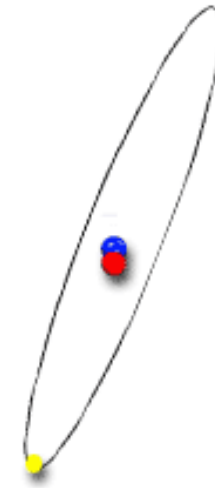
**Carbon 13**  
Stable



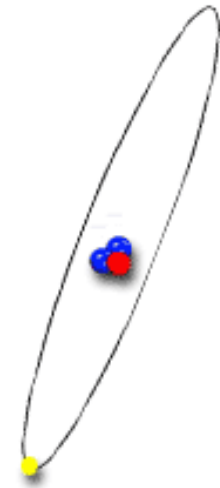
**Carbon 14**  
Unstable (radioactive)



*Hydrogène*  
(1 proton)



*Deutérium*  
(1 proton + 1 neutron)

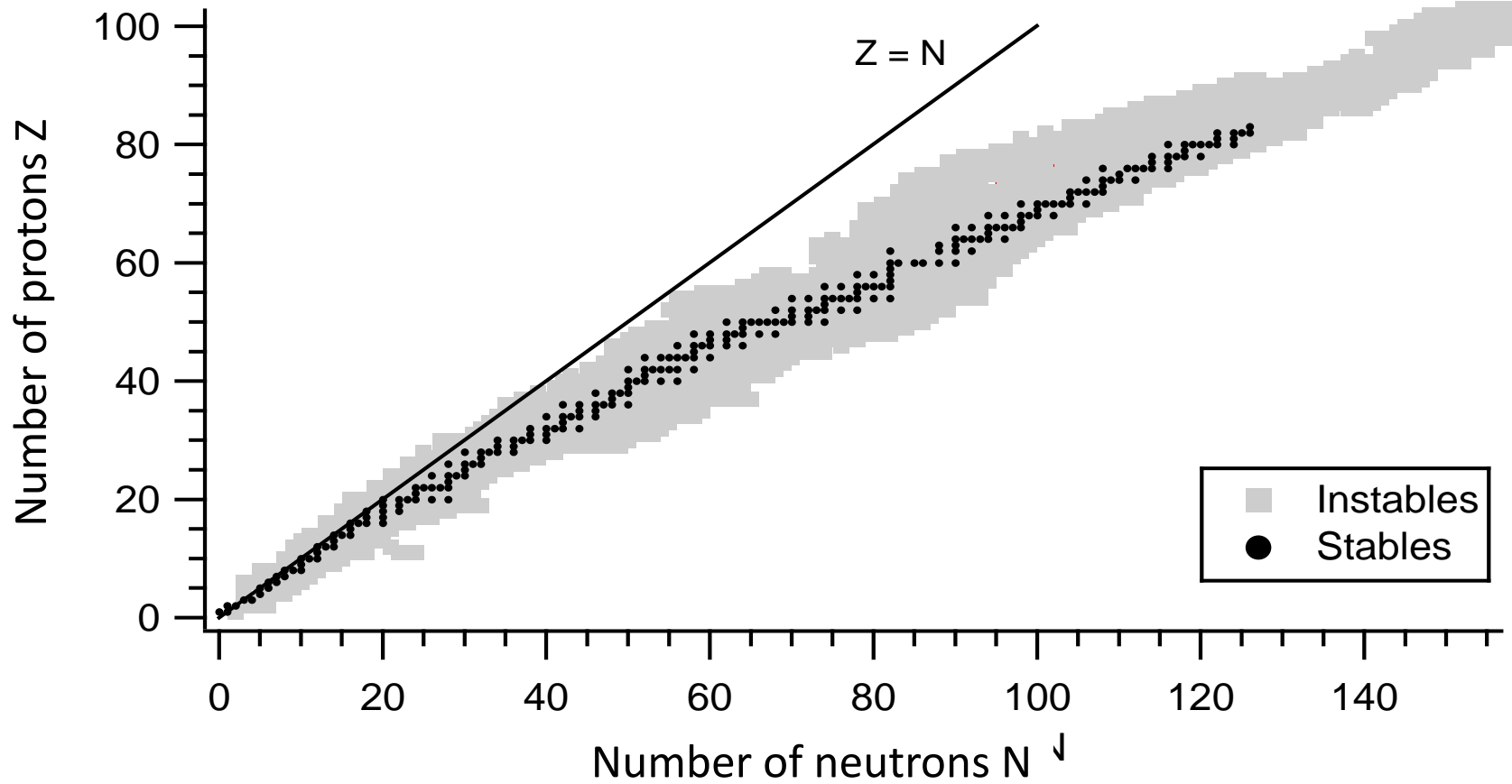


*Tritium*  
(1 proton + 2 neutrons)

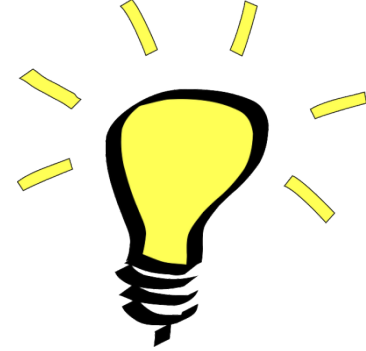
hydrogène has three isotopes :

- **hydrogène:**        1 p, 1 e<sup>-</sup>
- **deuterium:**        1 p, 1 n, 1 e<sup>-</sup>
- **tritium:**            1 p, 2 n, 1 e<sup>-</sup>

# Chart of the nuclides



# Solution : Size of a carbon atom

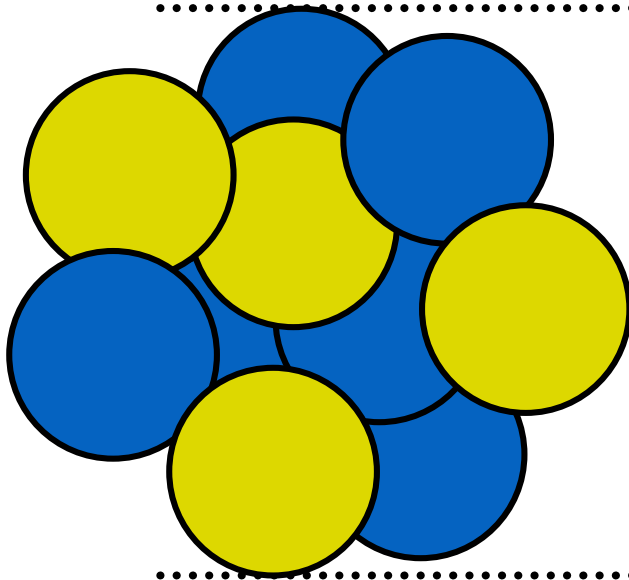


Scale

1 electron = 1 ant



# Solution : Size of carbon nucleus

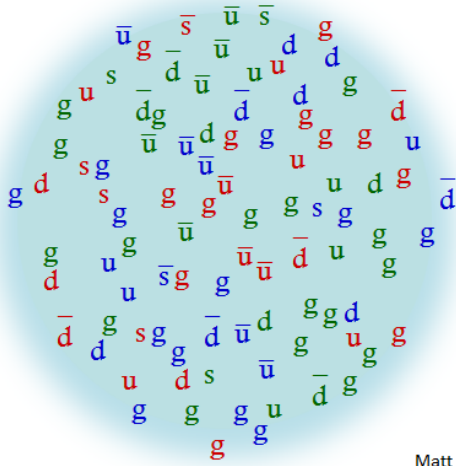


Scale

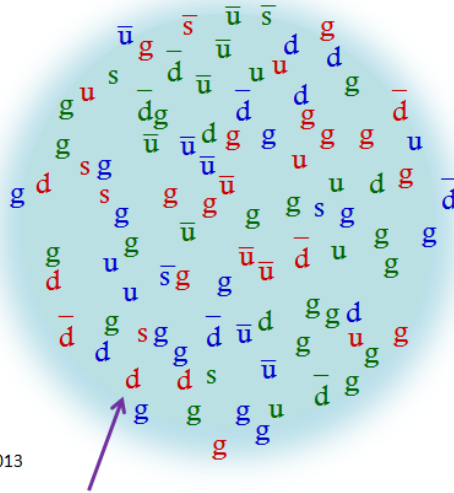
1 electron = 1 ant

# "More modern" vision of the nucleus

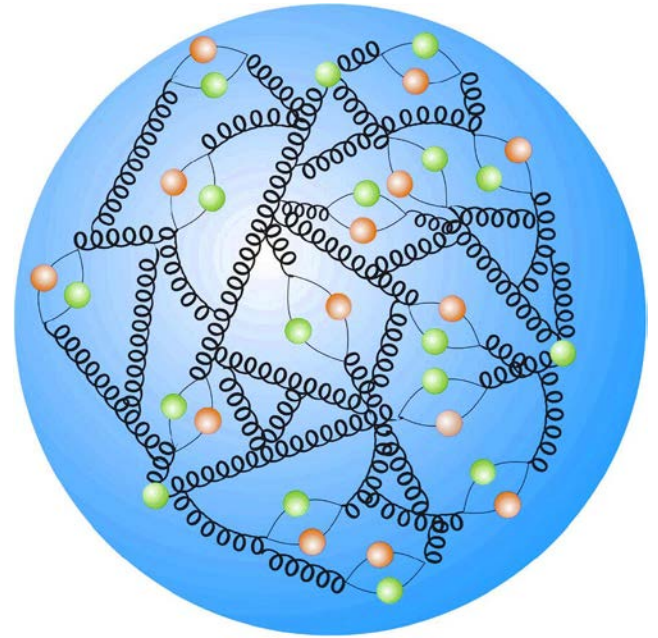
proton



neutron



Matt Strassler 2013





Radioactive decay

# Radioactive decay

- Alpha

*emission of 2 p & 2 n*

- Beta

- Beta -

- Beta +

- Electron capture

*emission of an electron  
or a positron  
from the nucleus*

- Gamma

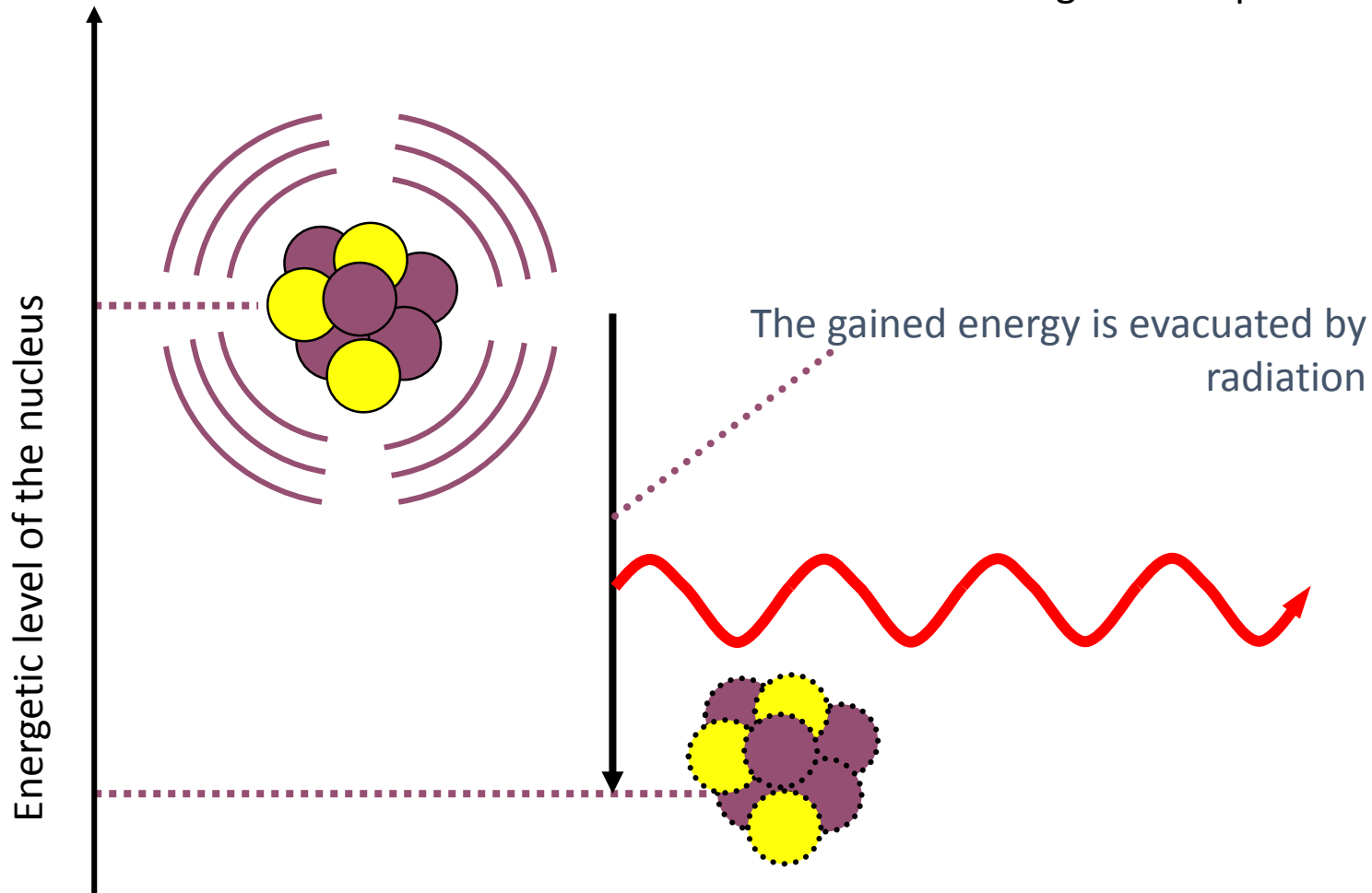
*emission of a photon  
from the nucleus*

# Radioactivity

- Radioactive decay
  - **Spontaneous** and **random** mechanism
  - Transformation of the nucleus
- Probability of decay per unit of time
  - Decay constant  $\lambda$  [ $s^{-1}$ ] :
    - Specific to the considered nucleus
    - Does not vary with time

# The nucleus is looking for stability

If a lower level exists and is reachable, the nucleus will tend to go there spontaneously.



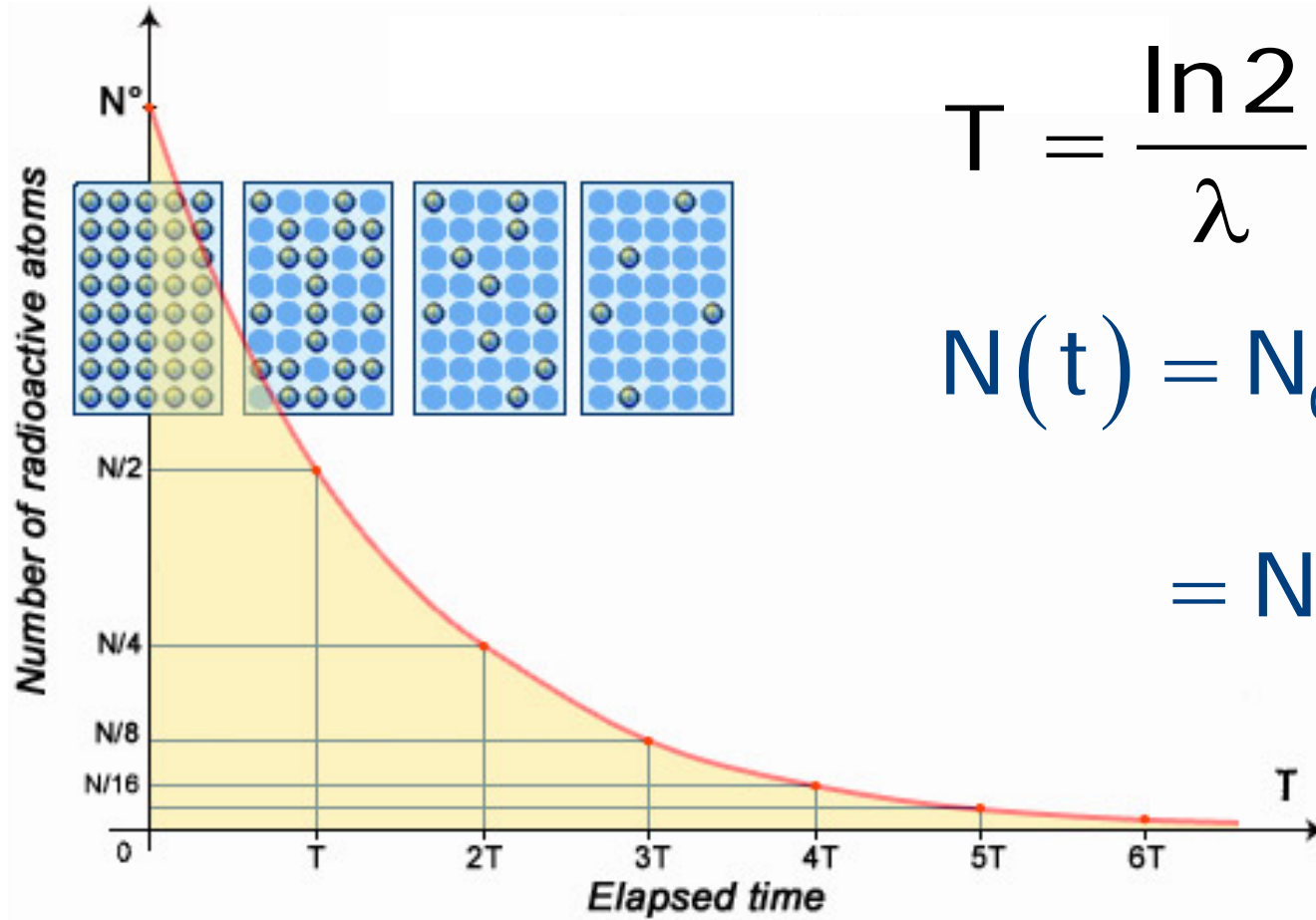
# Radioactivity

$$dN(t) = -\lambda N(t) dt \quad \Rightarrow \quad \frac{dN(t)}{dt} = -\lambda N(t)$$

$$N(t) = N_0 e^{-\lambda t} \quad \text{Exponential decay}$$

Half-life

T (half-life): time necessary to reduce N by 2

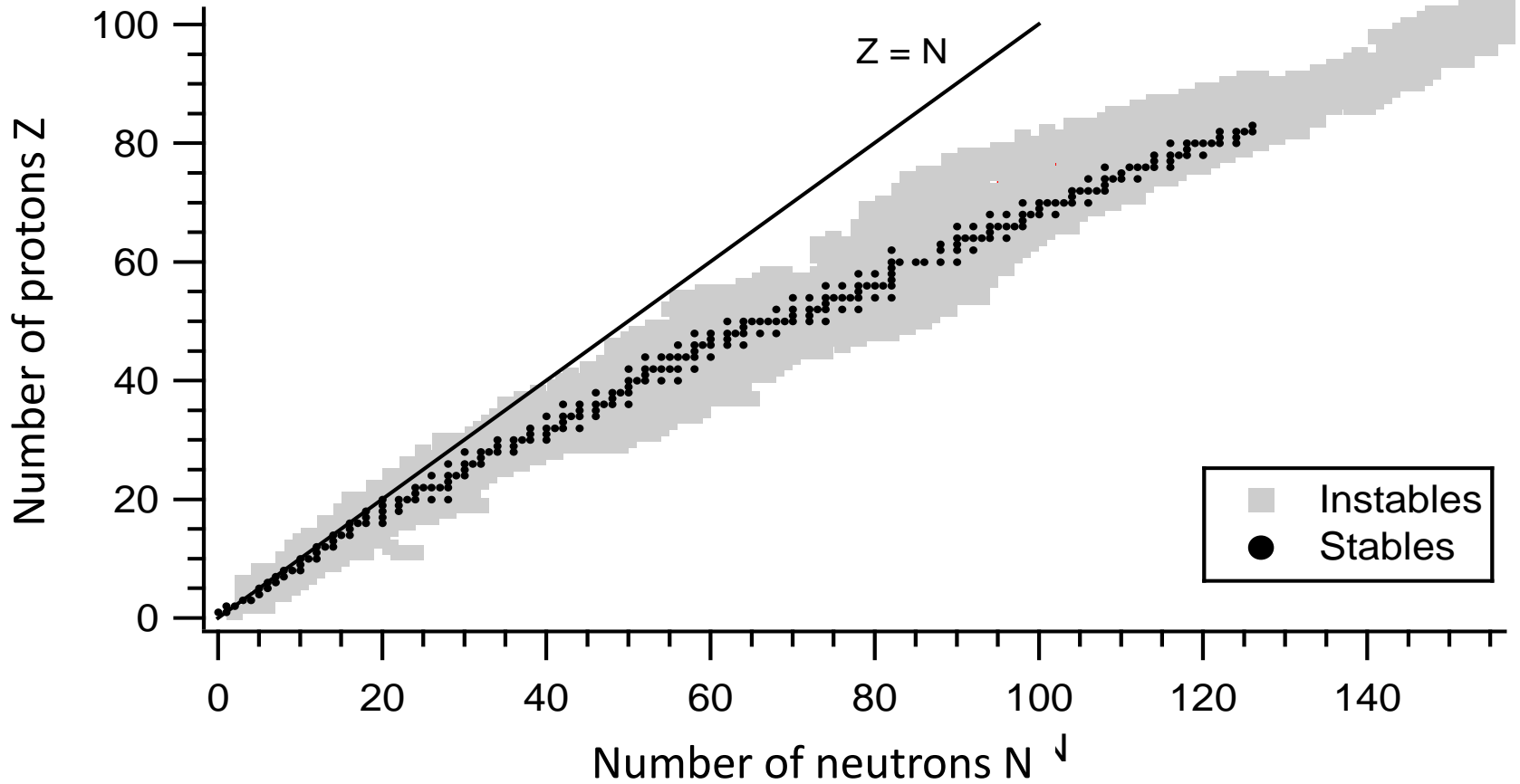


$$T = \frac{\ln 2}{\lambda}$$

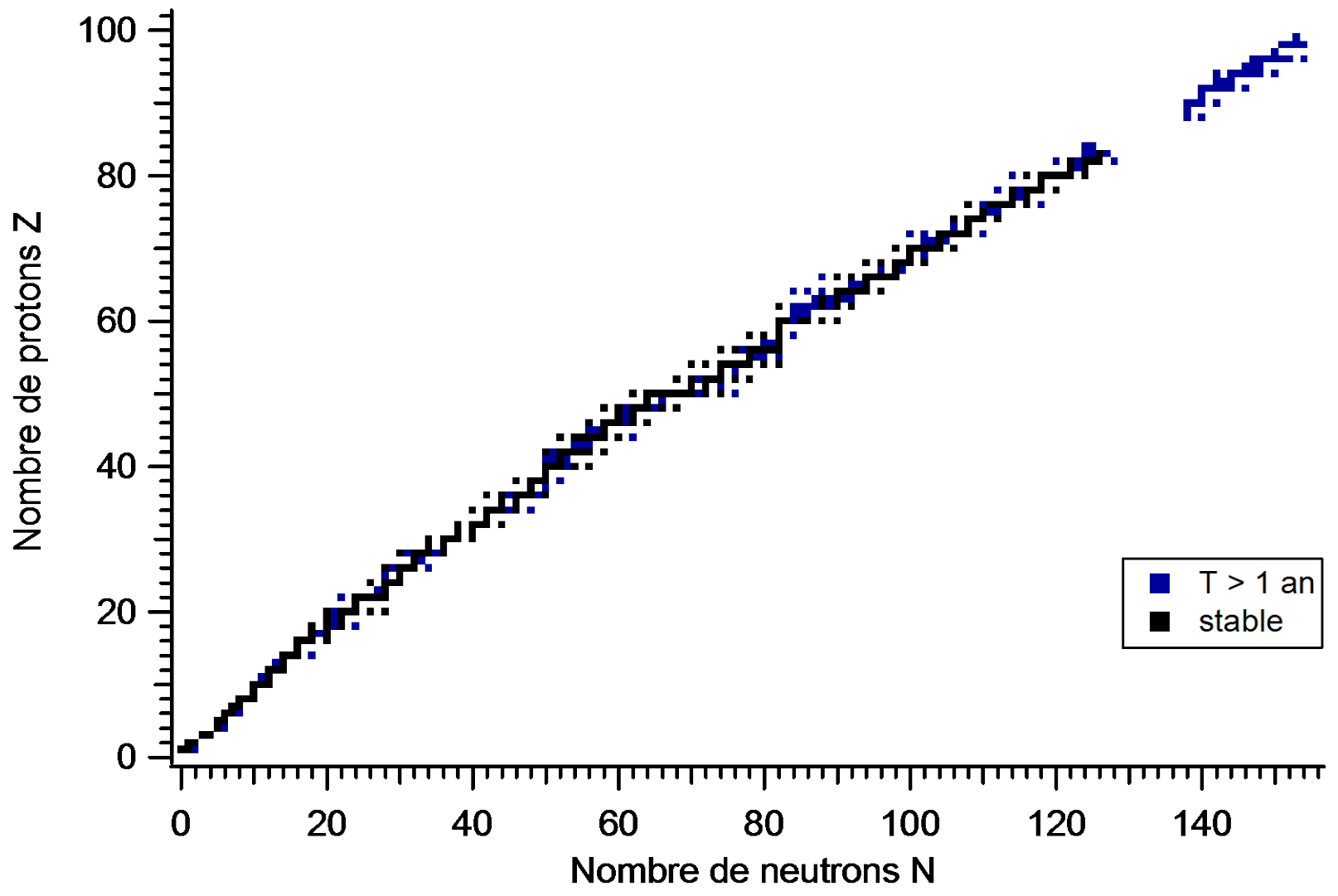
$$N(t) = N_0 e^{-\lambda t}$$
$$= N_0 e^{-\frac{\ln(2)}{T} t}$$



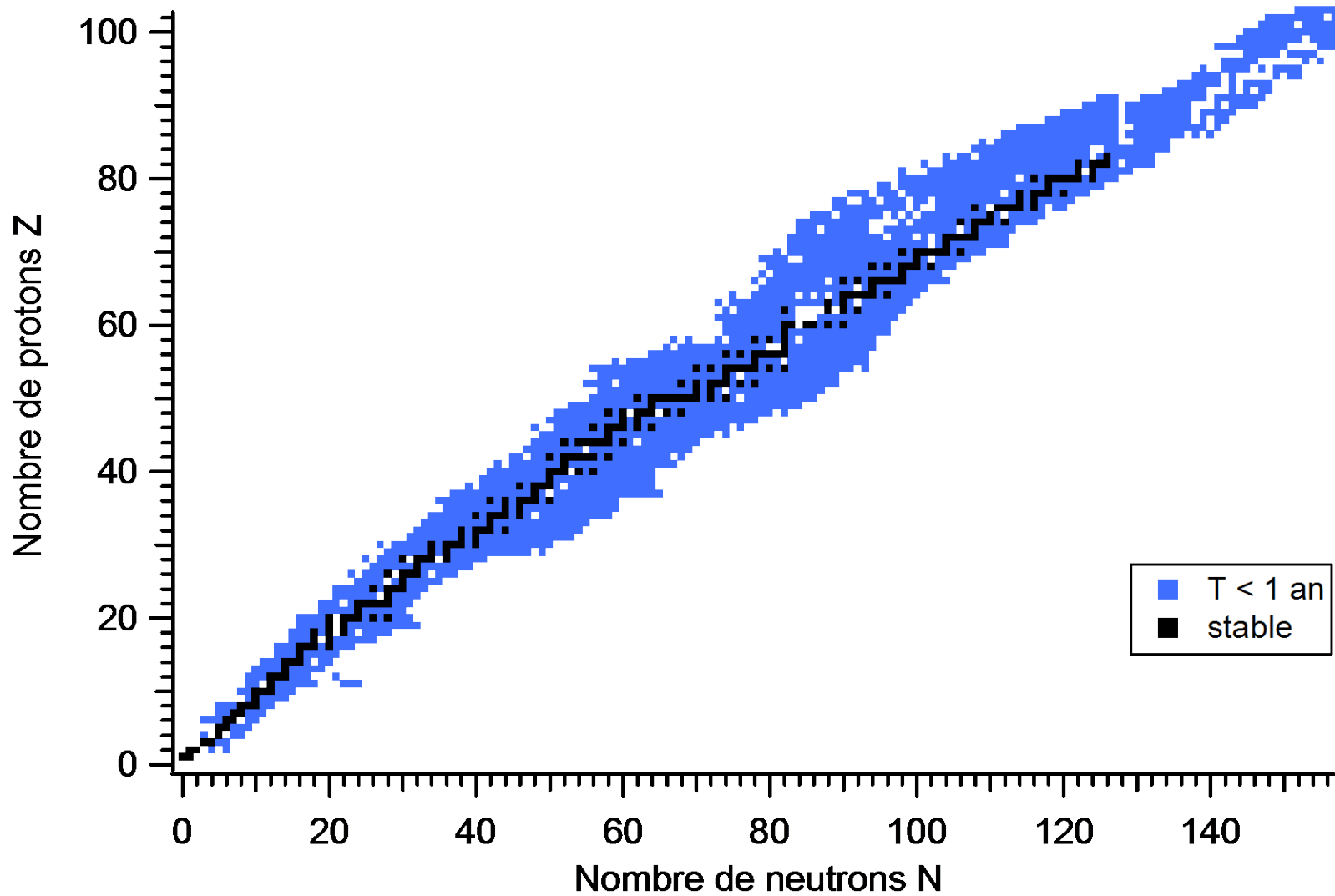
# Chart of the nuclides



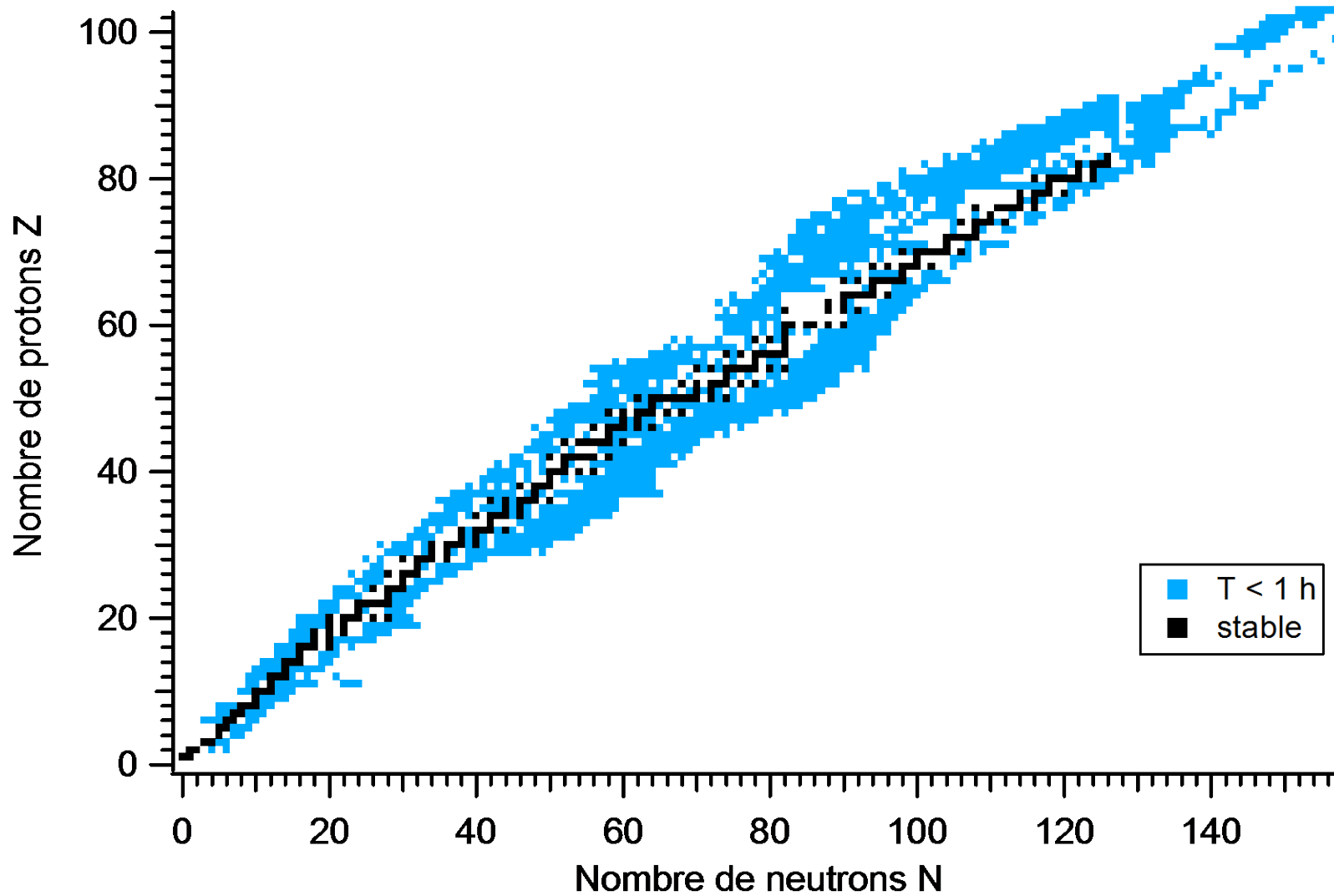
# Half-life: most stable elements



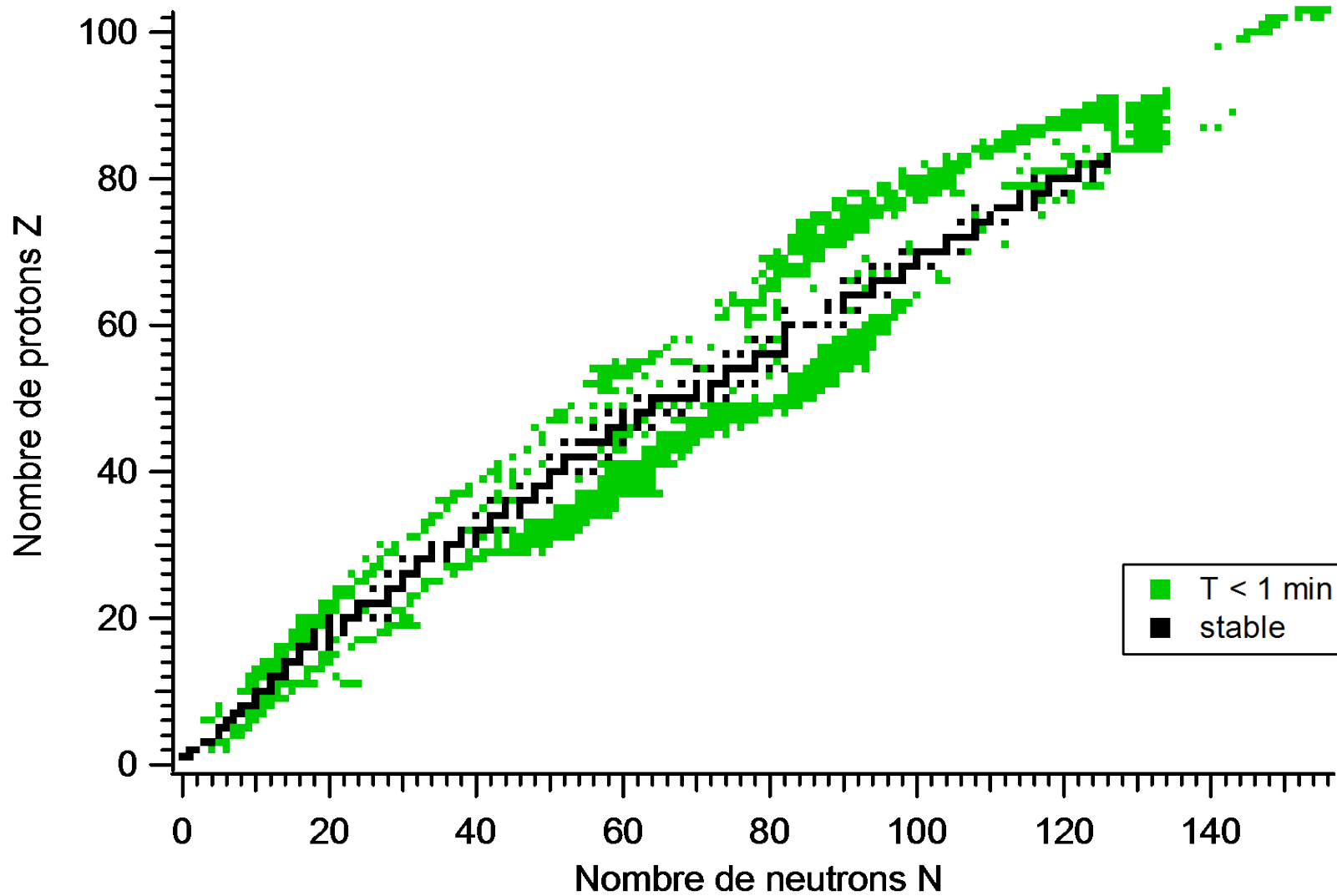
# Half-life



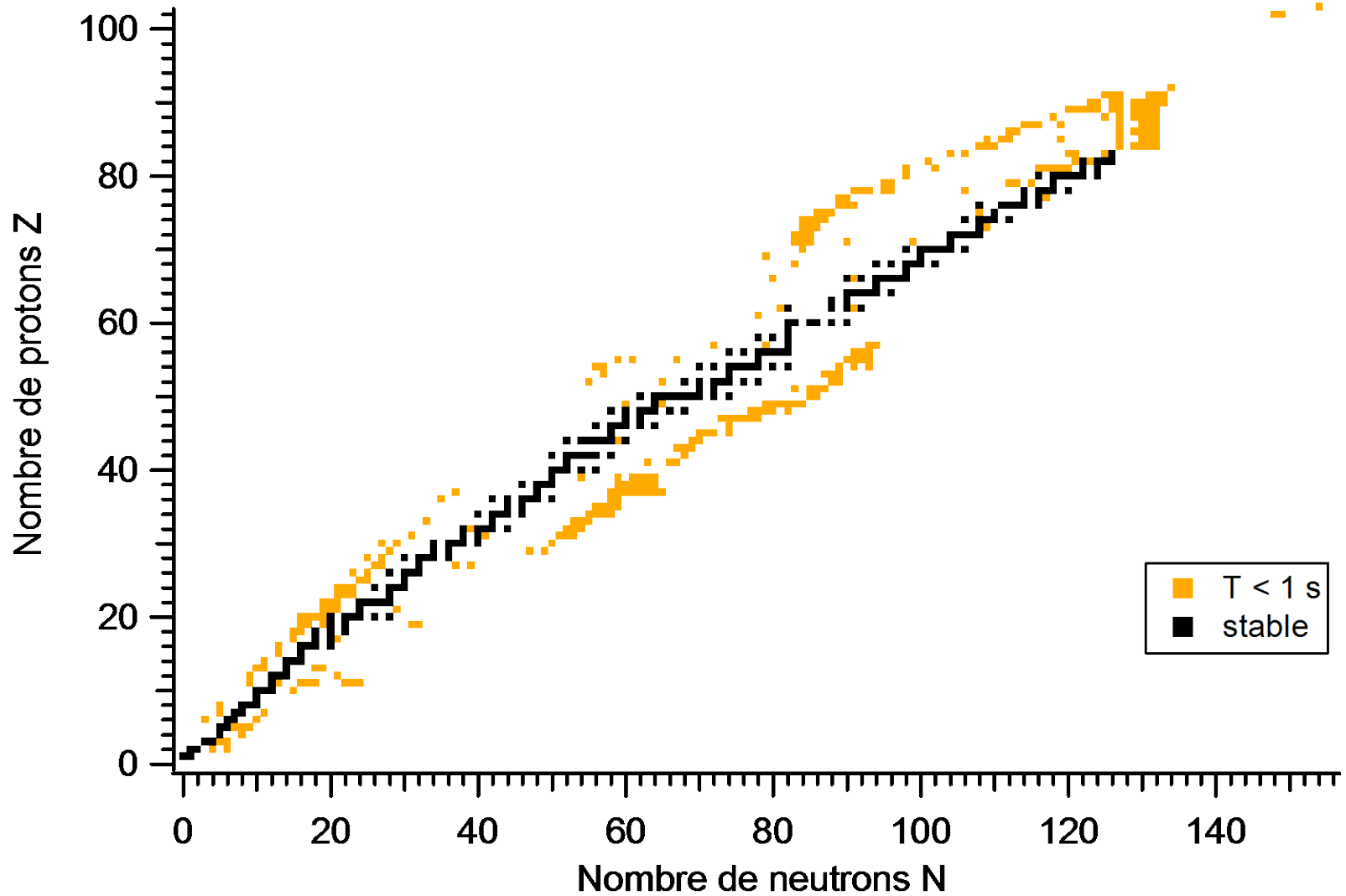
# Half-life



# Half-life



# Half-life: least stable elements



# Activity

- Number of unstable nucleus  $N(t)$  difficult to measure
  - Number of decays per unit of time

Unit :  $s^{-1} = \text{Bq} = \text{becquerel}$

$$A = \lambda N$$

- $A(t)$  evolves as  $N(t)$ :
  - Exponential decay with half-life  $T$

$$A(t) = A_0 e^{-\frac{\ln(2) t}{T}}$$



## Exercise : Activity

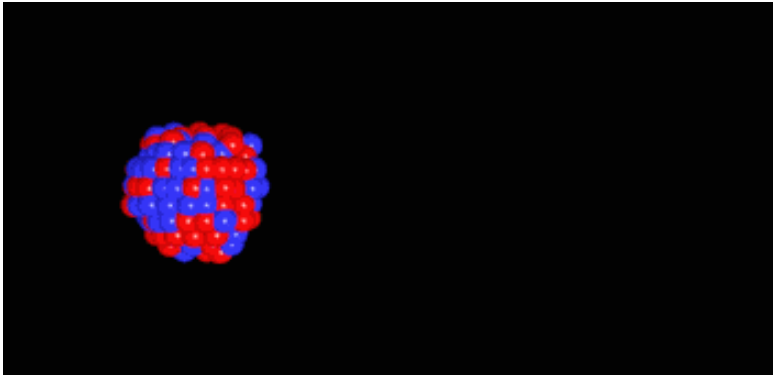
- You have a solution of Tc-99m with an activity of 96 MBq/ml delivered at 7:00 :
  - You have to prepare a sample of 96 MBq at 19:00 the same day
  - Which volume do you extract ?





## Solution : Activity

- You have a solution of Tc-99m with an activity of 96 MBq/ml delivered at 7:00 :
  - You have to prepare a sample of 96 MBq at 19:00 the same day
  - Which volume do you extract?
- 2 half-lives between 7:00 and 19:00
- The activity of the stock solution decayed by approximately a factor of 4
- To get 96 MBq, you need  $\approx$  **4 ml**

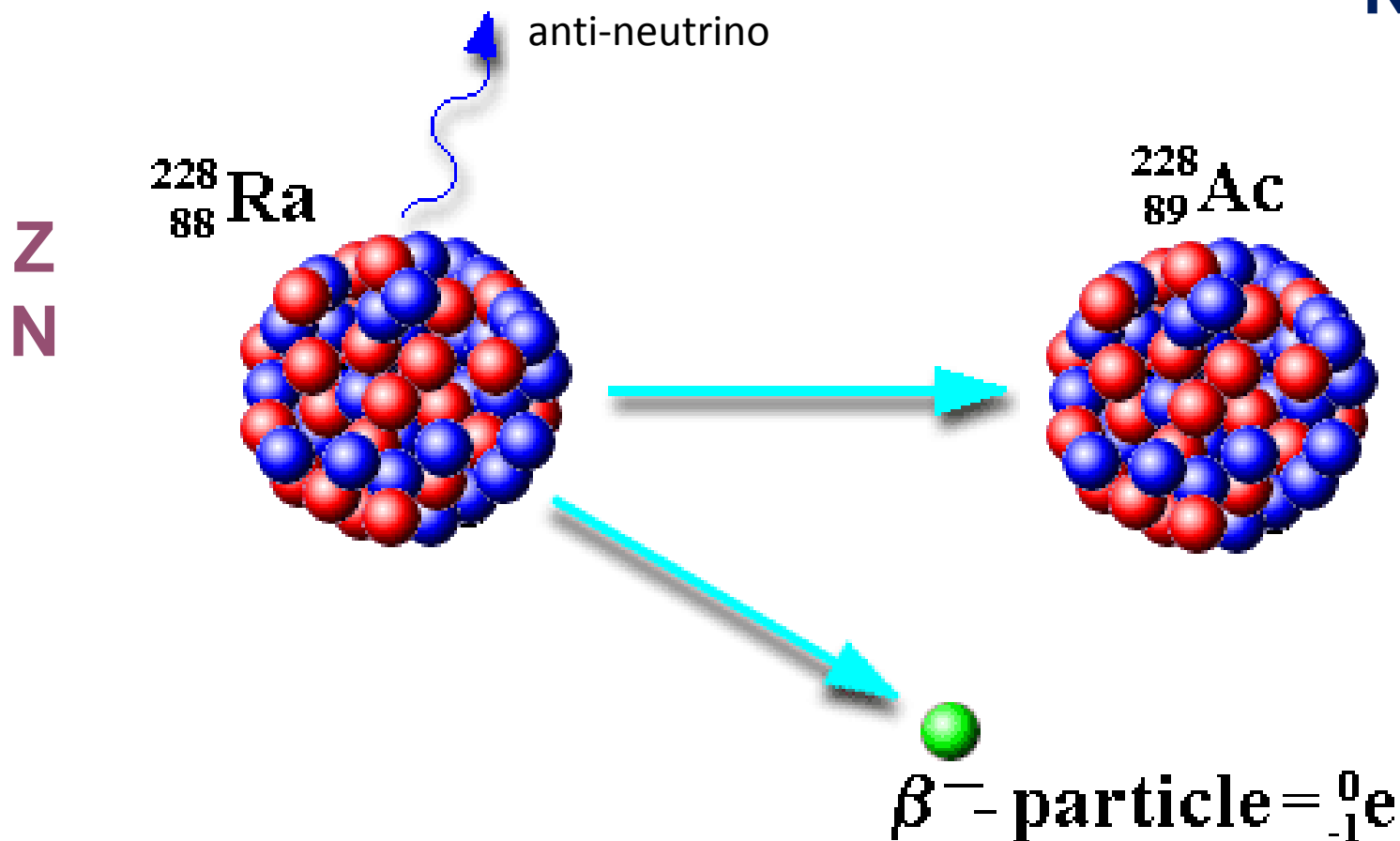


Beta minus decay

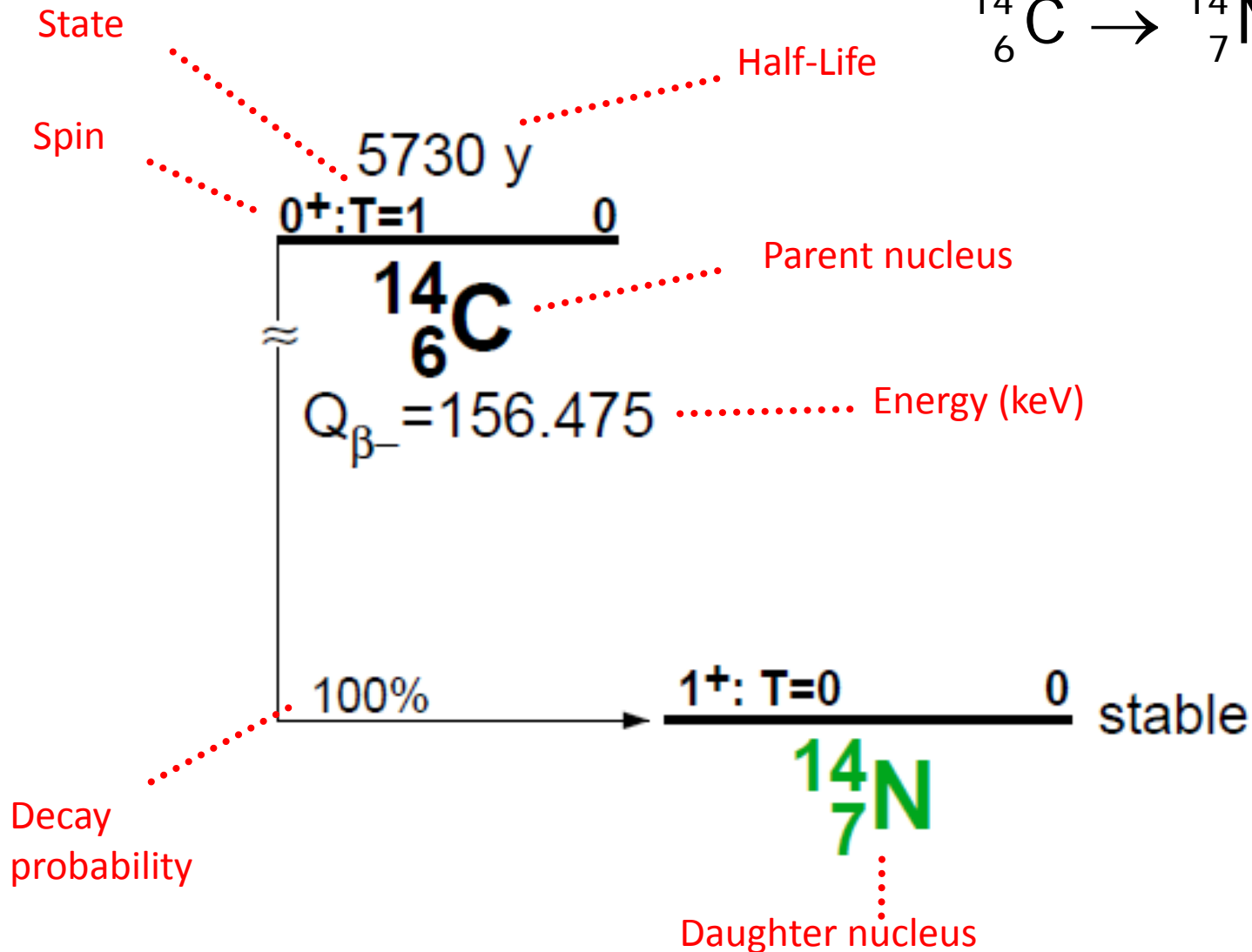
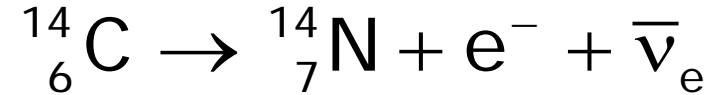
$\beta^-$  decay

$Z+1$

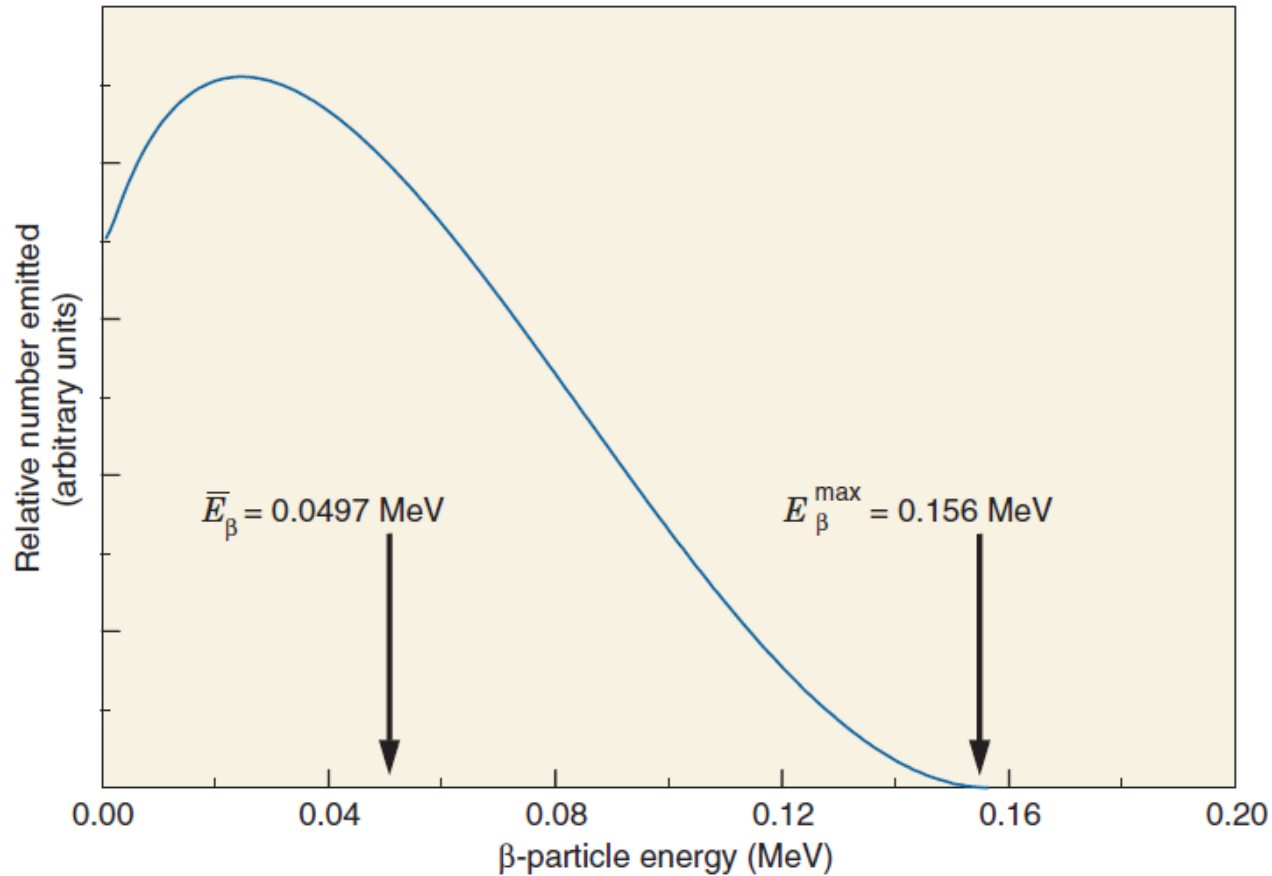
$N-1$



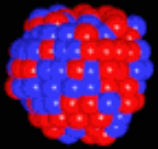
# Example of pure beta decay



# Example of beta spectrum

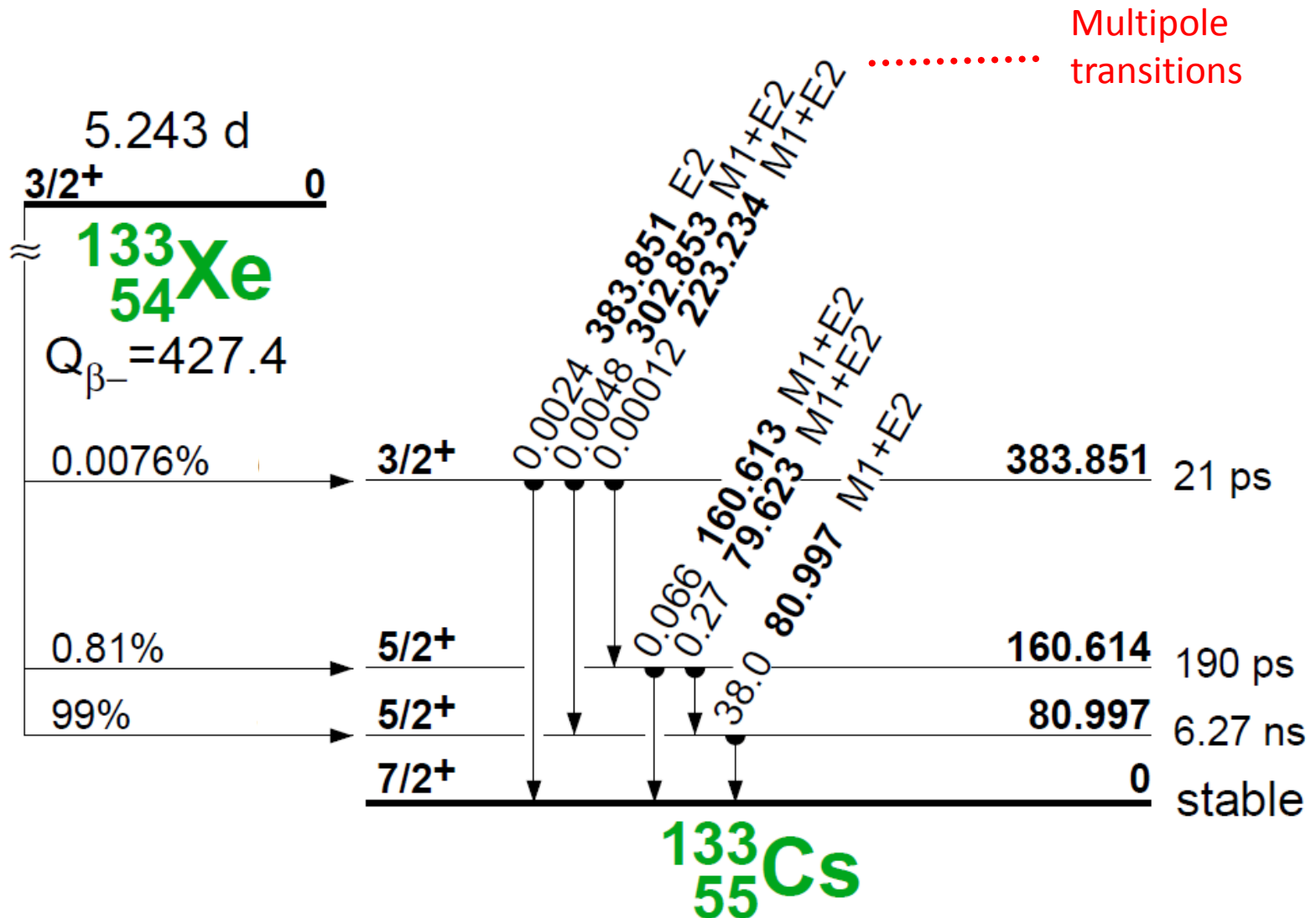


**FIGURE 3-2** Energy spectrum (number emitted vs. energy) for  $\beta$  particles emitted by  $^{14}\text{C}$ . Maximum  $\beta$ -particle energy is  $Q$ , the transition energy (see Fig. 3-1). Average energy  $\bar{E}_\beta$  is 0.0497 MeV, approximately  $(\frac{1}{3}) E_\beta^{\text{max}}$ . (Data courtesy Dr. Jongwha Chang, Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute.)



Gamma emission &  
Internal conversion  
(competitive processes)

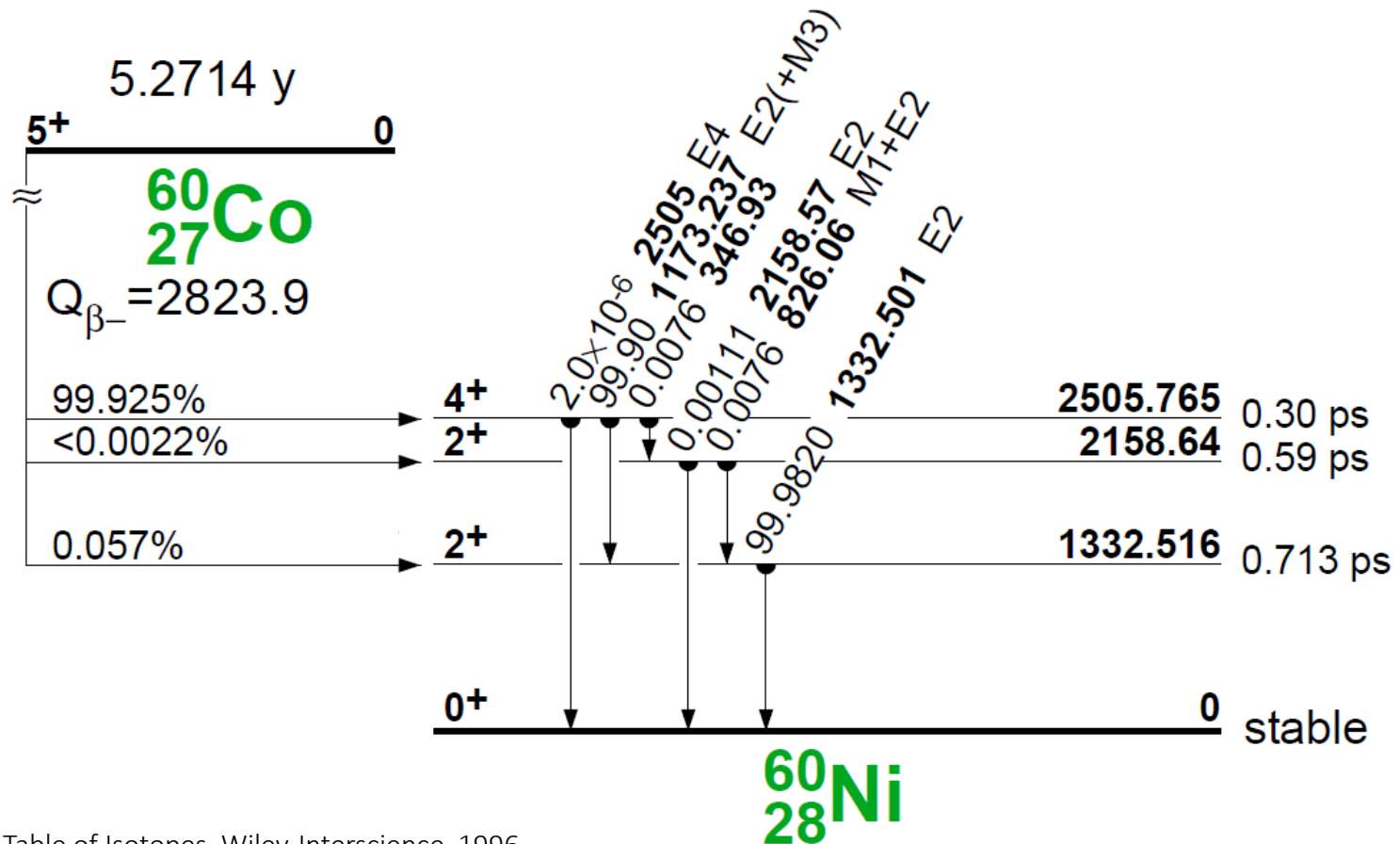
# Example of beta decay with gamma emissions





# Exercise : decay of Co-60

What is the mean number of photons emitted after 10'000 decays of Co-60?

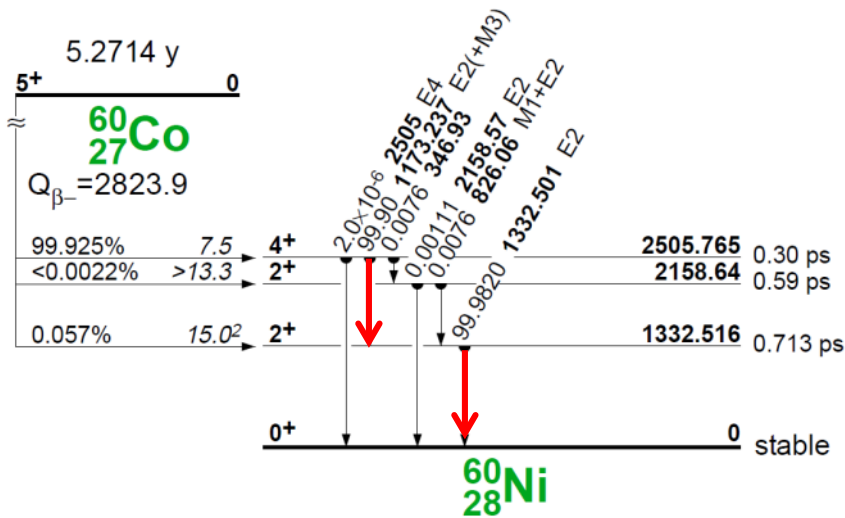






# Solution : decay of Co-60

What is the mean number of photons emitted after 10'000 decays of Co-60?



Only two gamma rays are significant

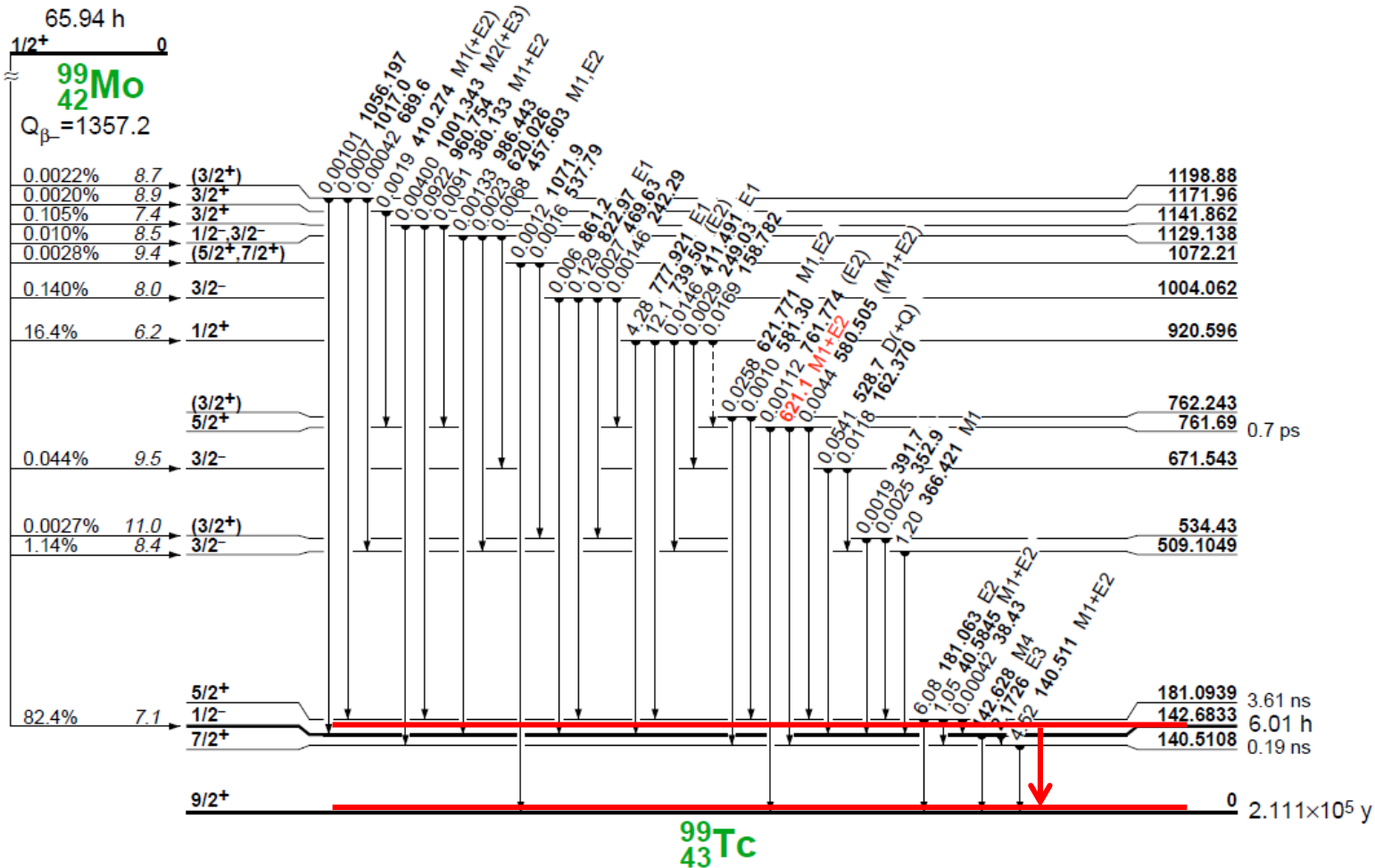
9990 photons of 1173 keV  
(2505 keV – 1332 keV)

9998 photons of 1332 keV  
(1332 keV – 0 keV)

Mean number of photons:  
9990 + 9998 = 19998

# Isomeric transition (delayed gamma emission)

metastable state

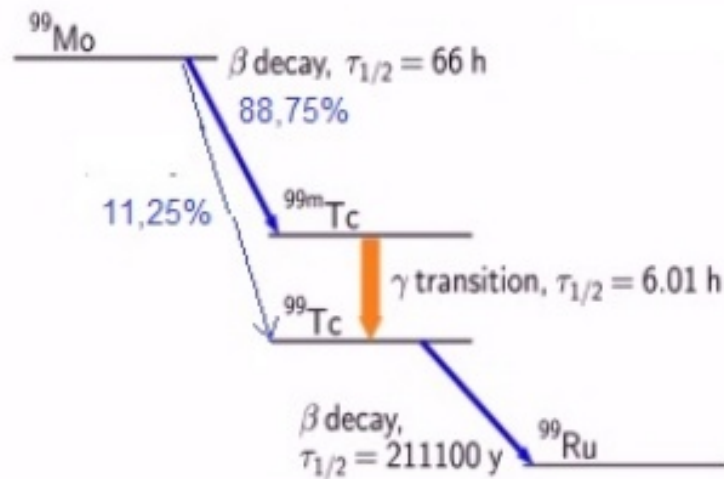


Tc-99m  
(exp decay)

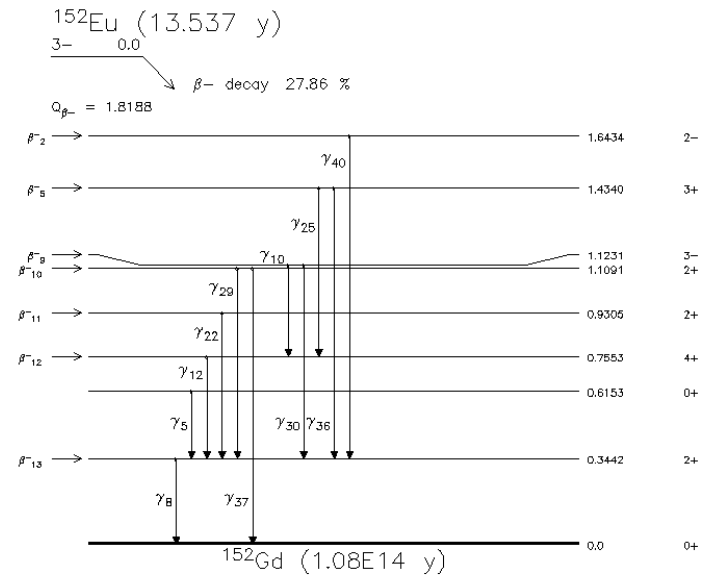
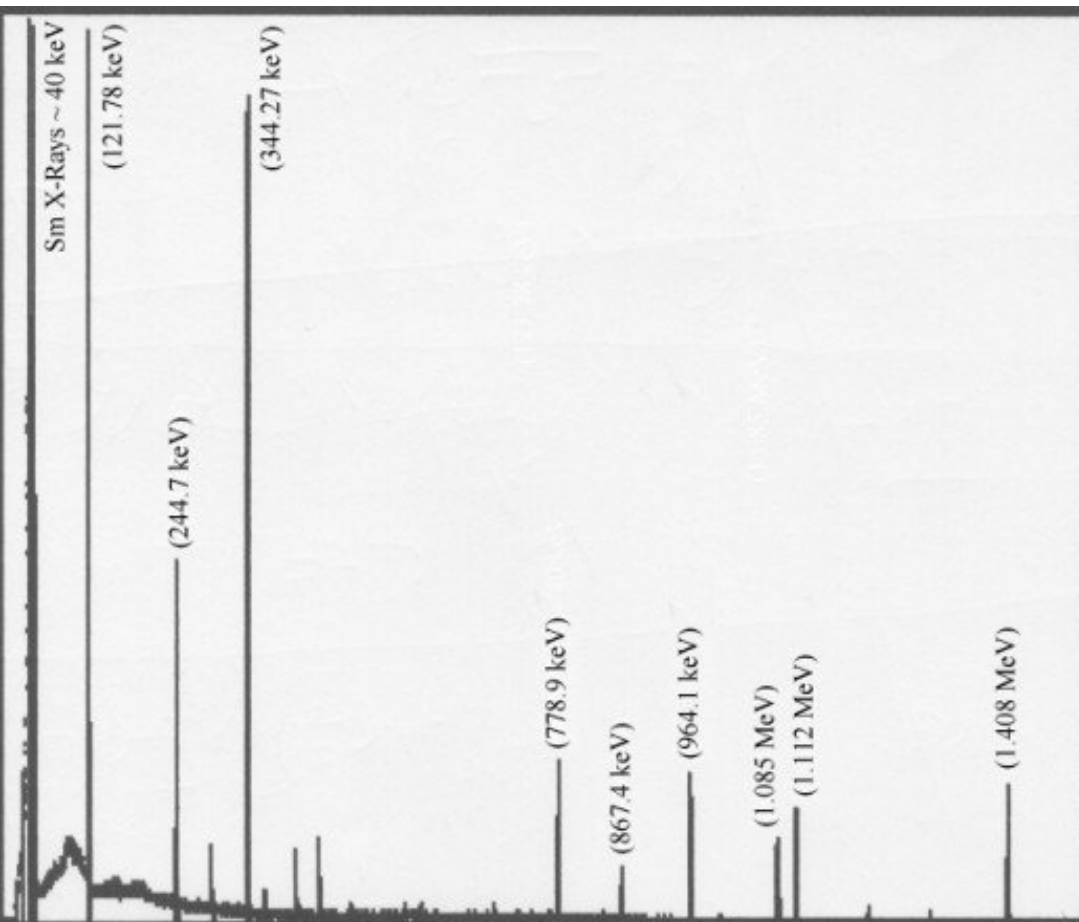
# Tc-99m Radionuclide properties for in Nuclear Medicine

Nuclear diagnostics SPECT ( single photon emission computer tomography)  
requirements: gamma emitters 100-200 keV,  $T_{1/2}$  = hours-days

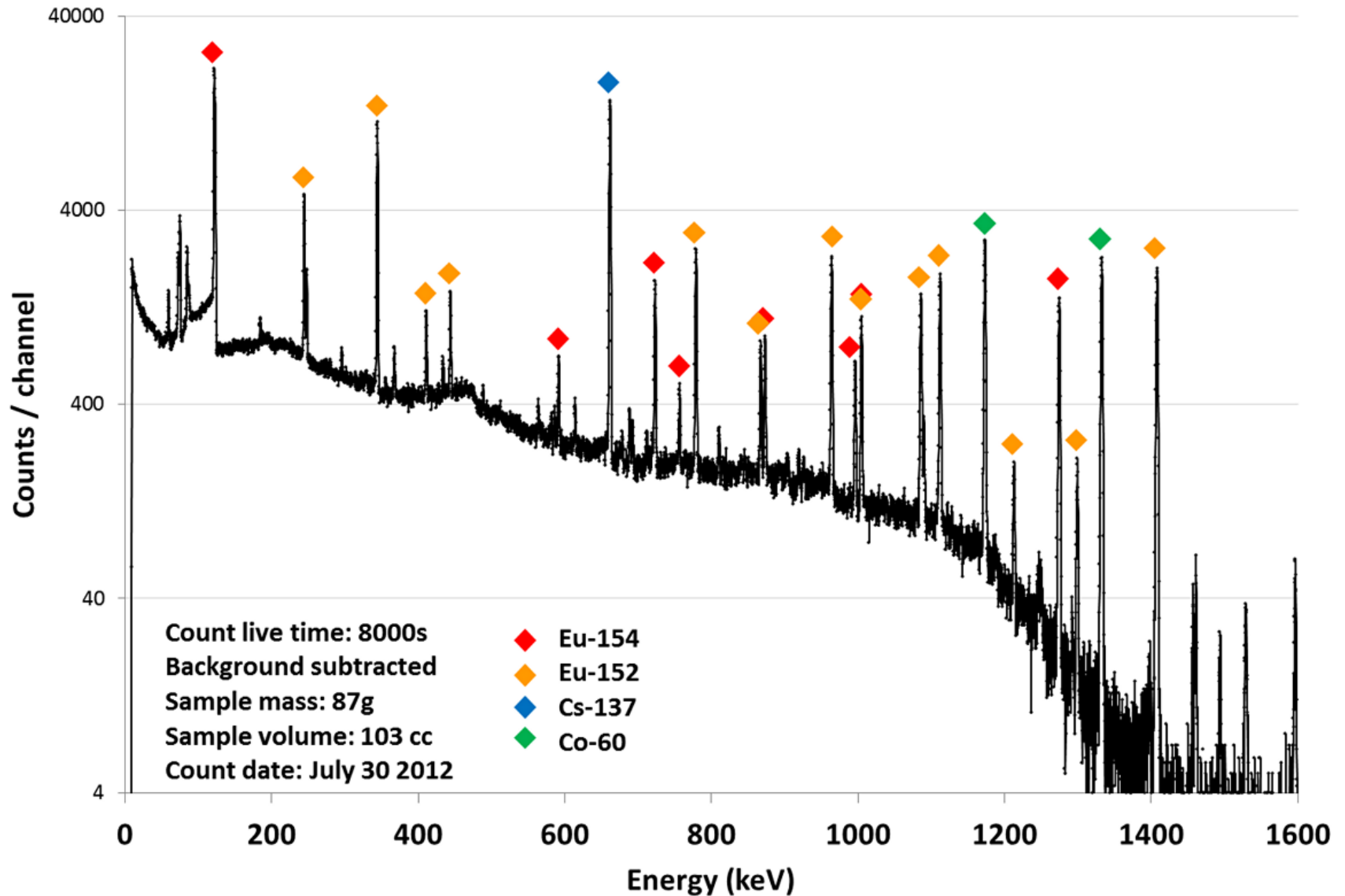
- **Tc<sup>99m</sup> nuclear isotope is used for medical imaging in 90% of cases all over the world due to its near ideal nuclear characteristics of a 6 h halflife and  $\gamma$ -ray emission energy of 142 keV**

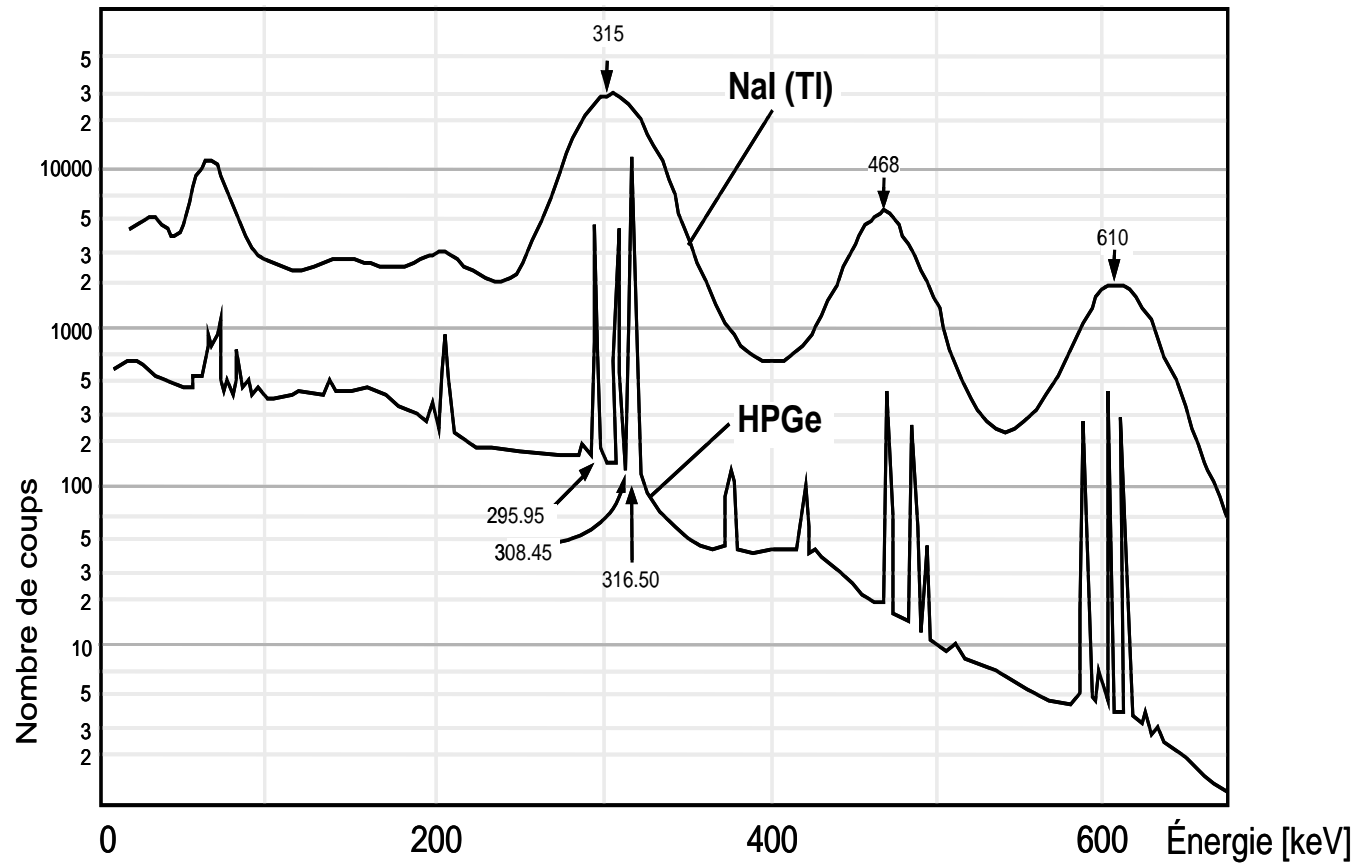


# Eu-152



# 0-1600 keV gamma energy spectrum, "Atomic Lake" ejecta



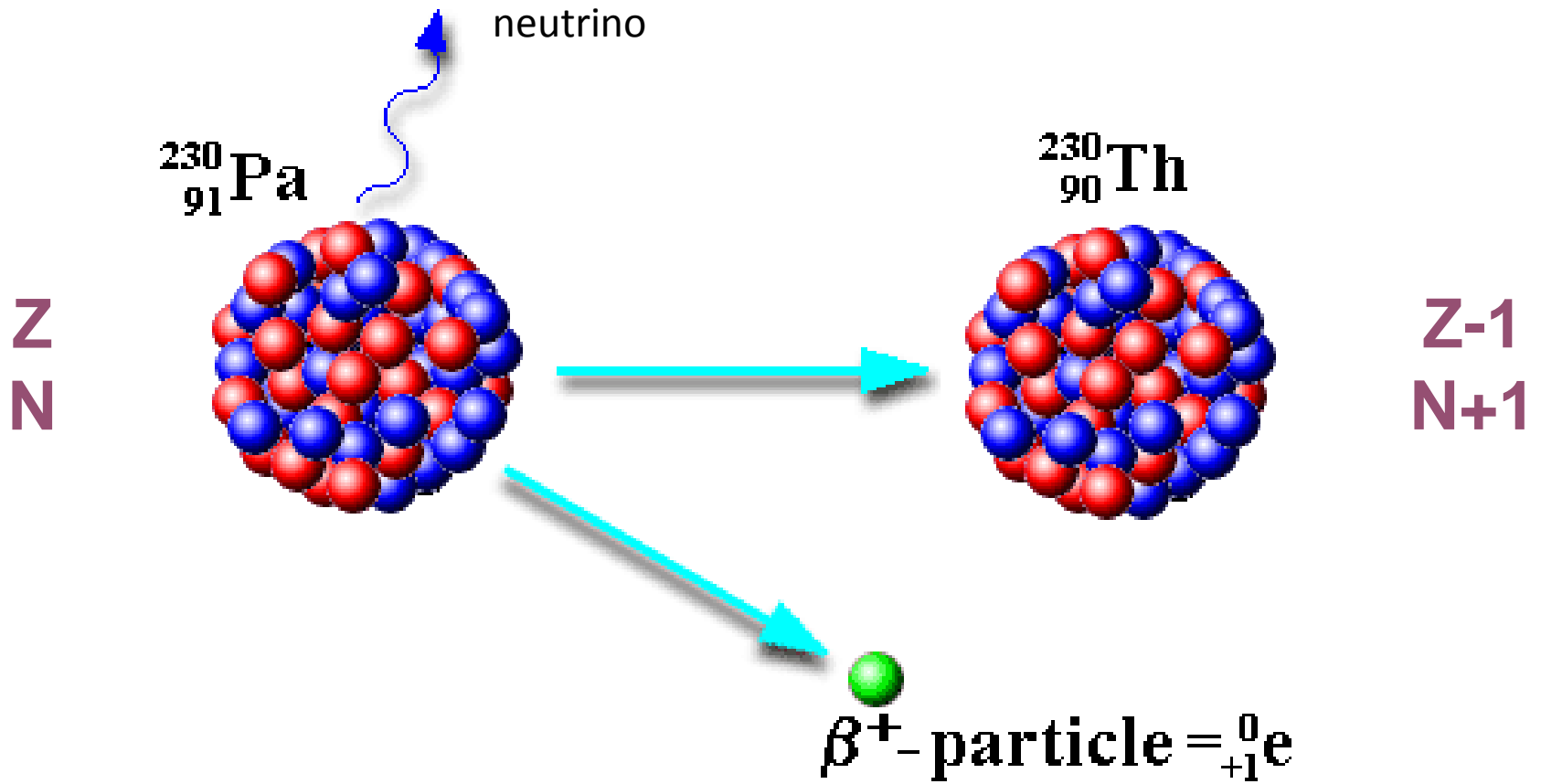


Comparison of Iridium-192 spectrum measured with a crystal scintillator (NaI) vs. a semi-conductor detector (HPGe).

⇒ Choice of the instruments

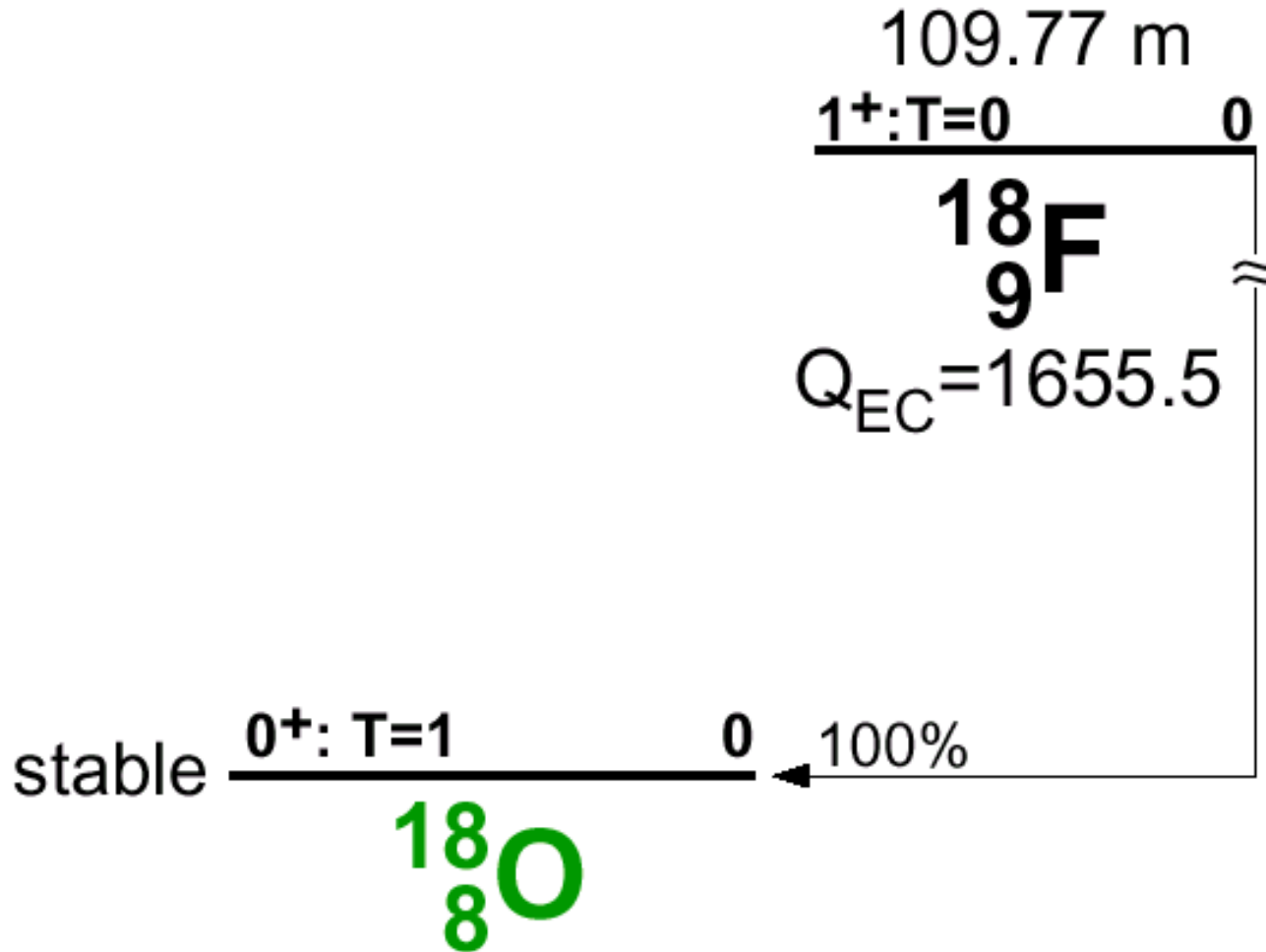
Beta plus decay &  
Electron capture  
(competitive processes)

# $\beta^+$ decay



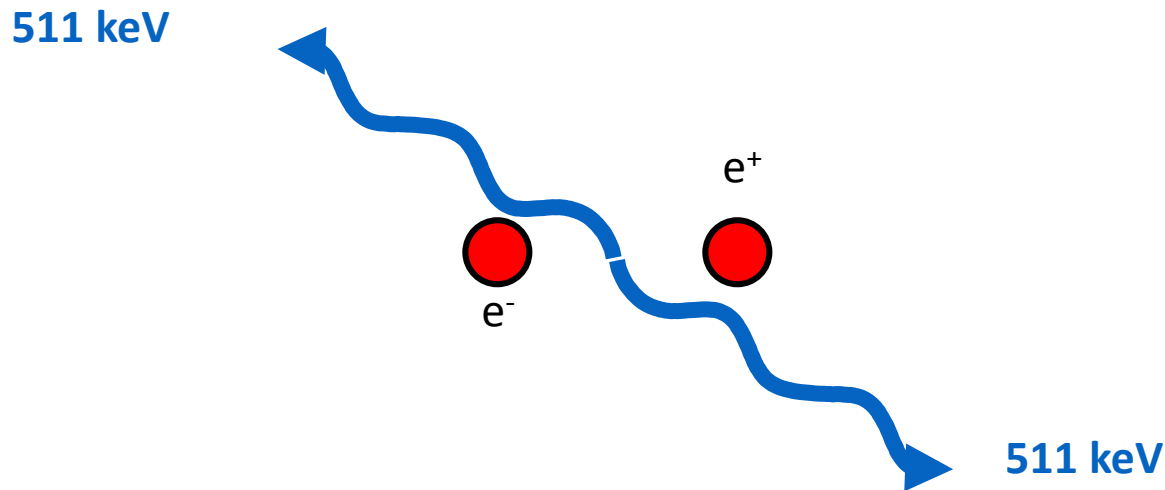


# Example of $\beta^+$ decay

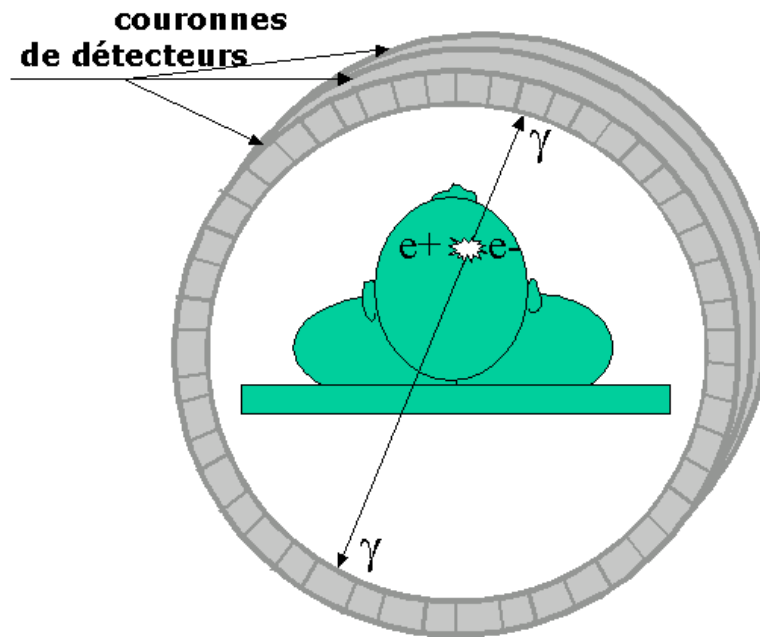
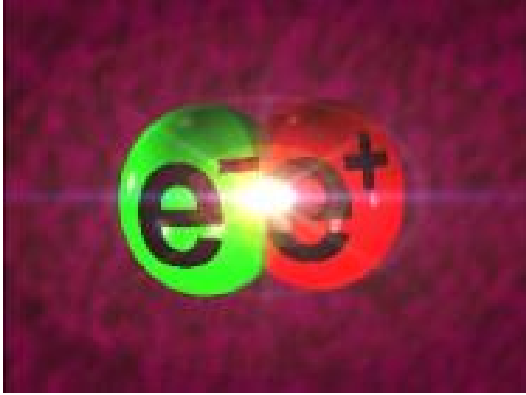


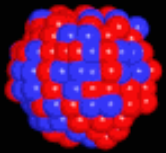
# Positron-electron annihilation

- The positron slows down in matter
- At slow speed: annihilation with an electron
- Result: 2 photons of 511 keV emitted at 180°
- Application : PET



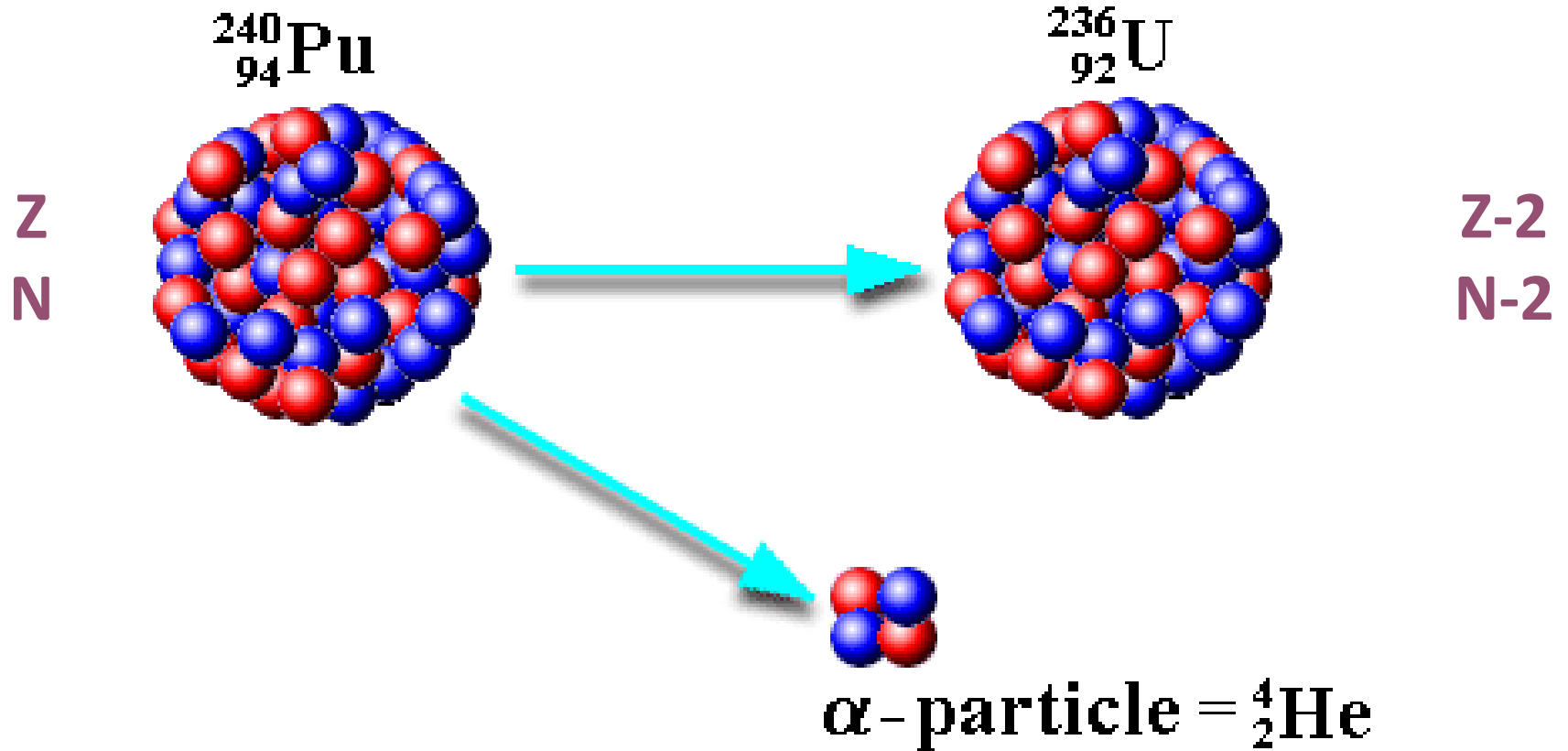
# Positron-electron annihilation



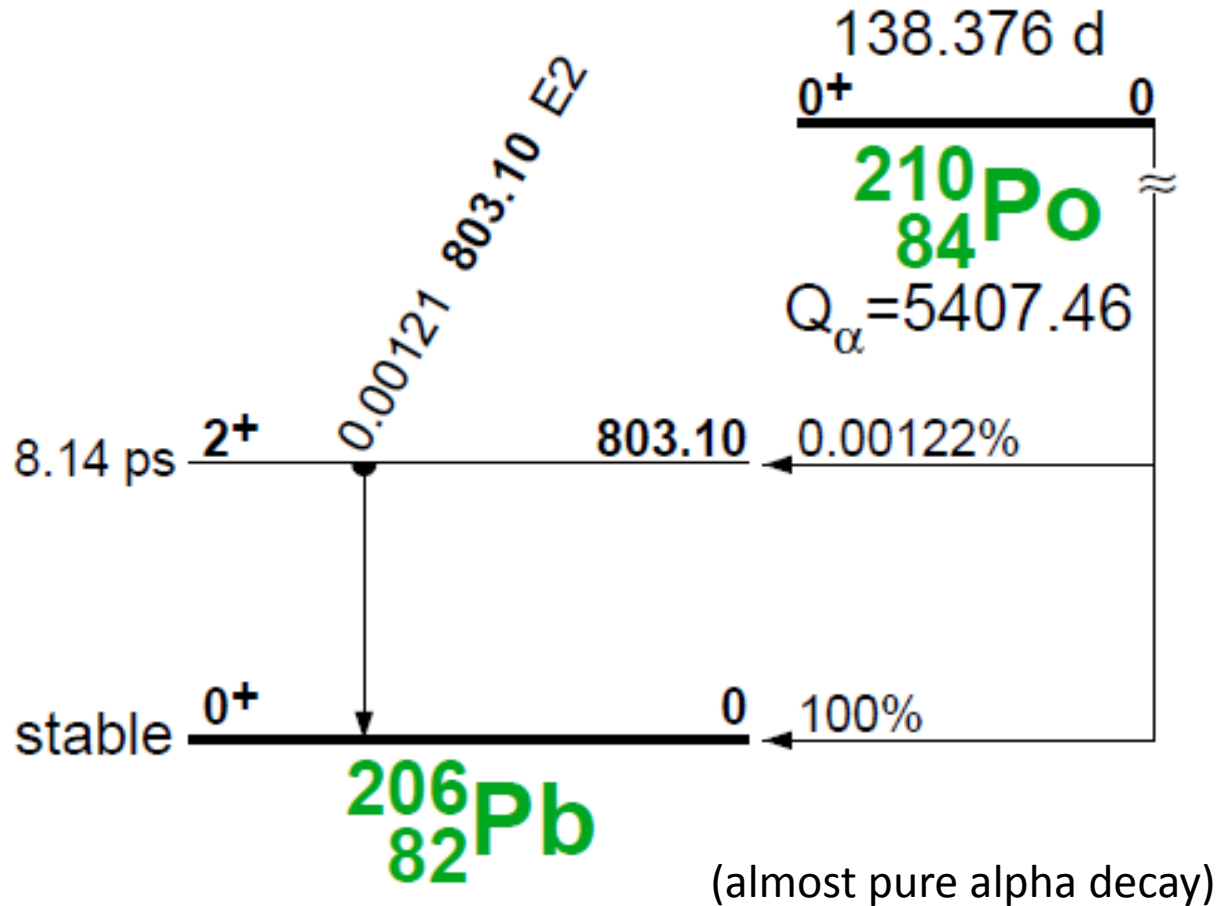


Alpha decay

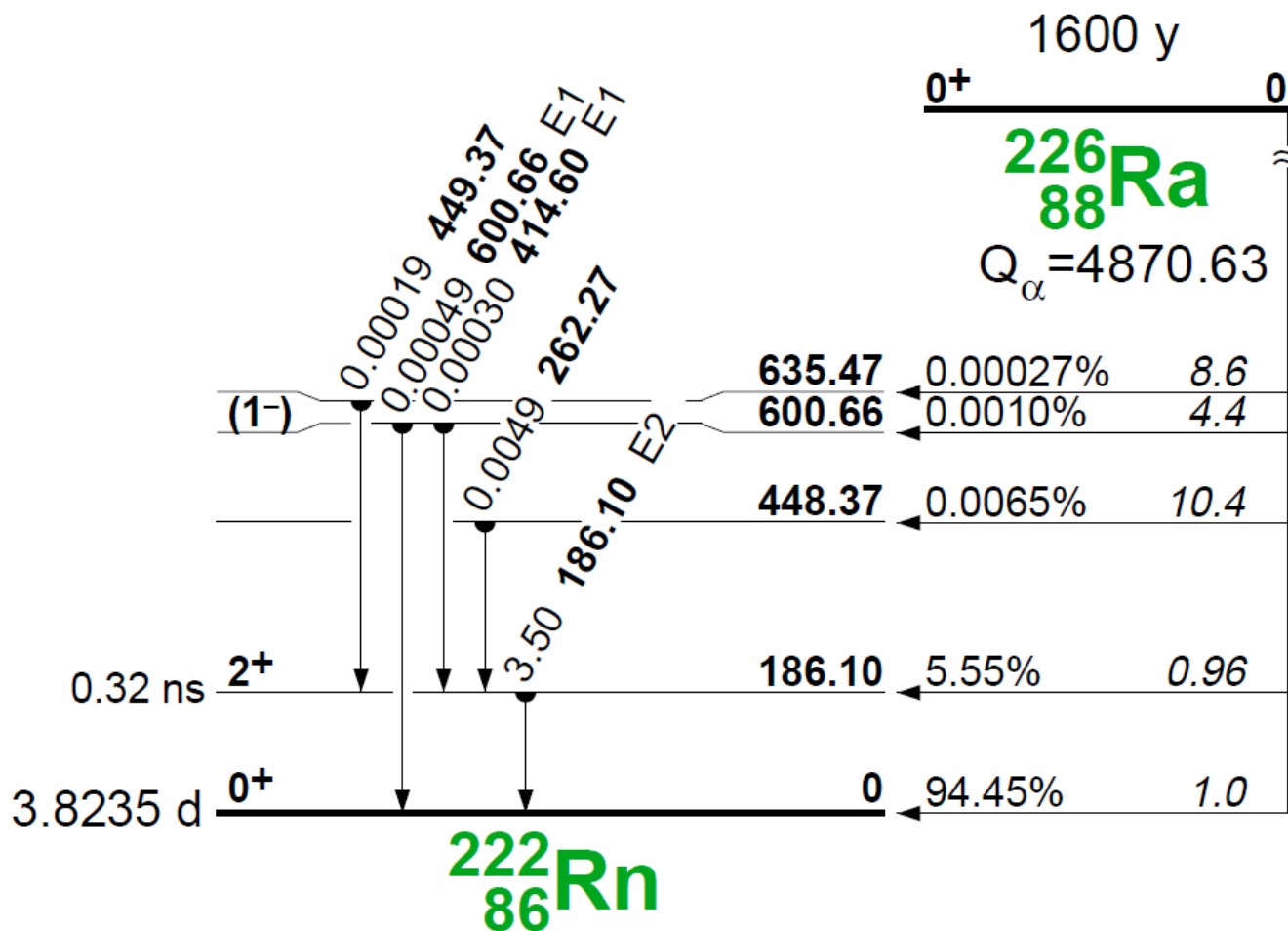
$\alpha$  decay



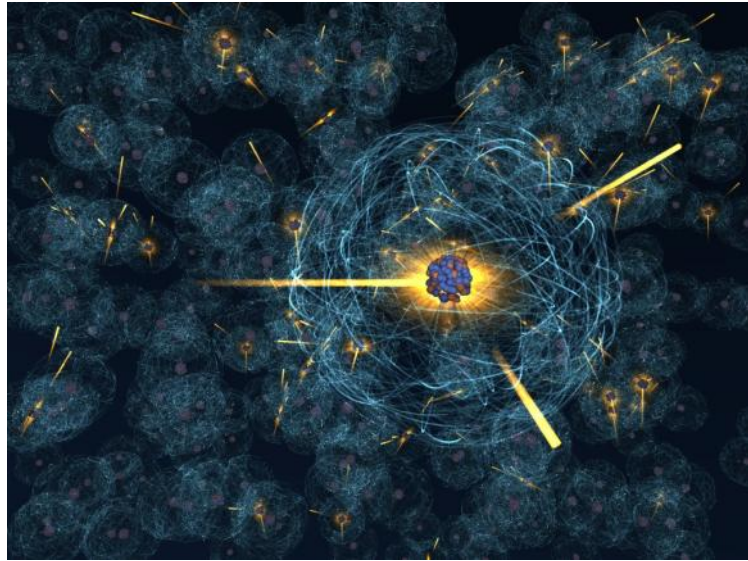
# Example of alpha decay



# Radium decay

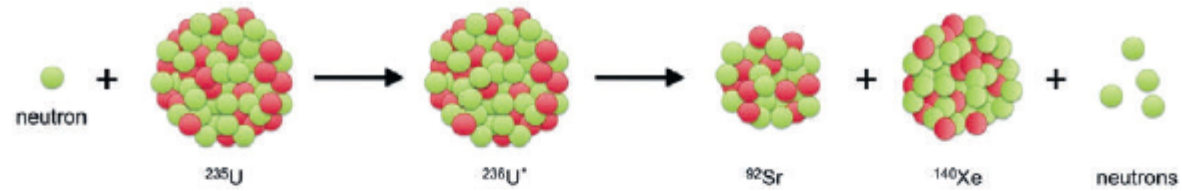


$^{222}_{86}\text{Rn}$

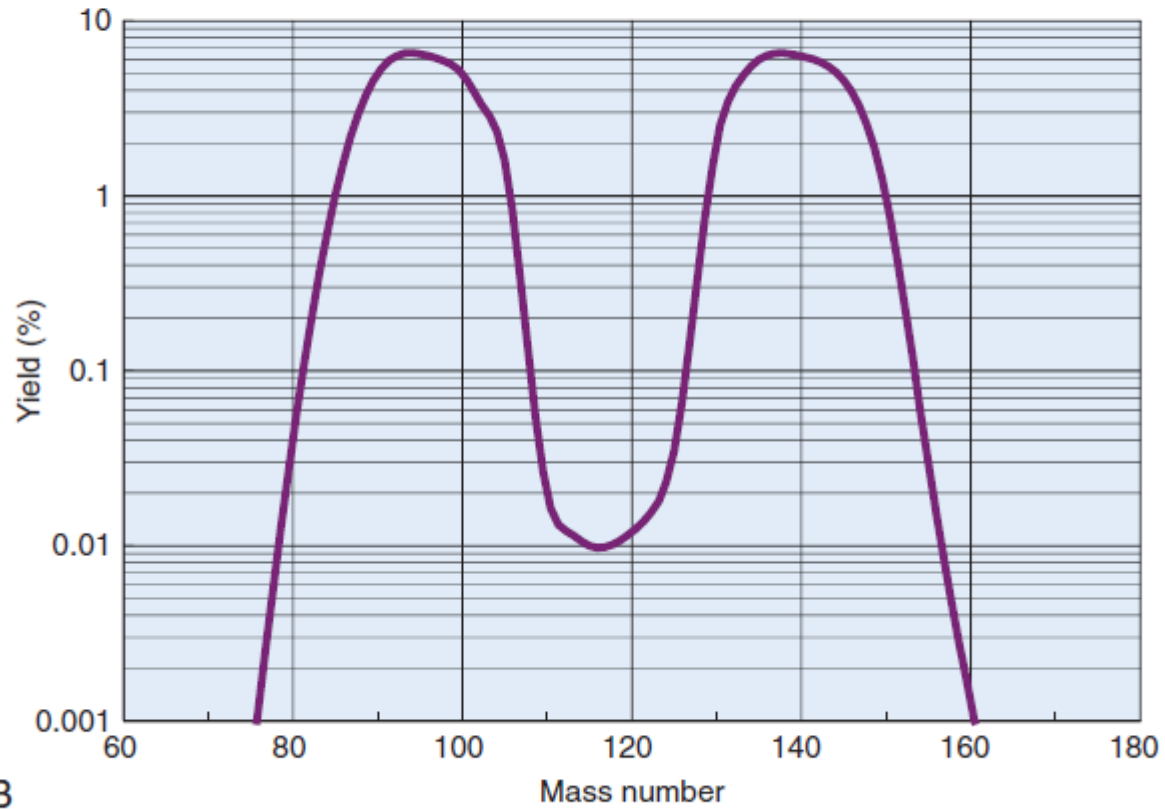


Fission





A

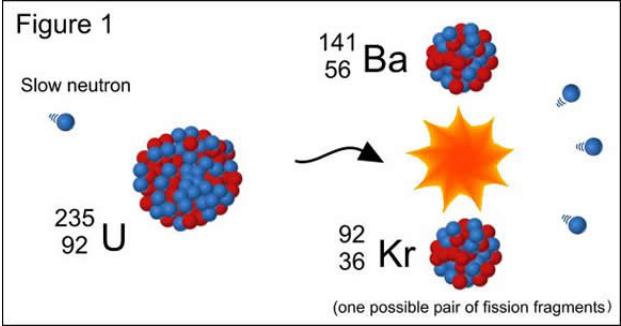
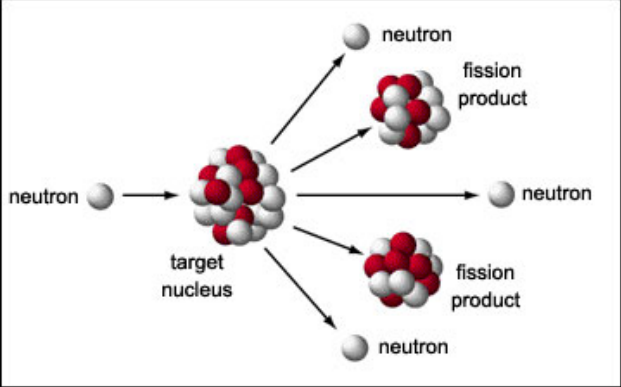


B

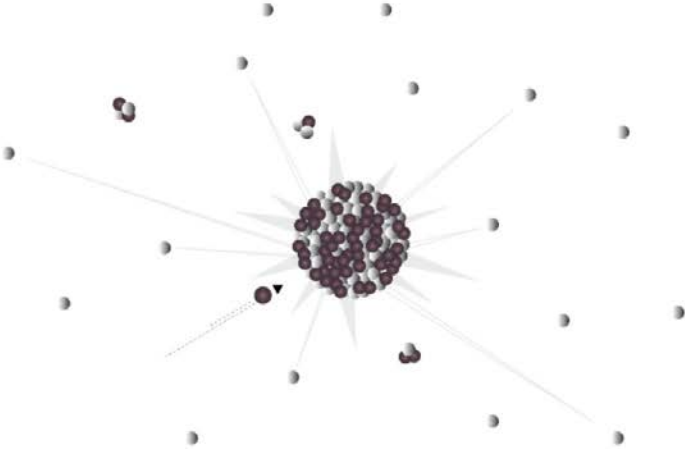
**FIGURE 5-2** A, Example of production of fission fragments produced when neutrons interact with  $^{236}\text{U}^*$ . B, Mass distribution of fragments following fission of  $^{236}\text{U}^*$ .

**Fission** — production of two elements of similar size

**Spallation** — fragmentation in light elements

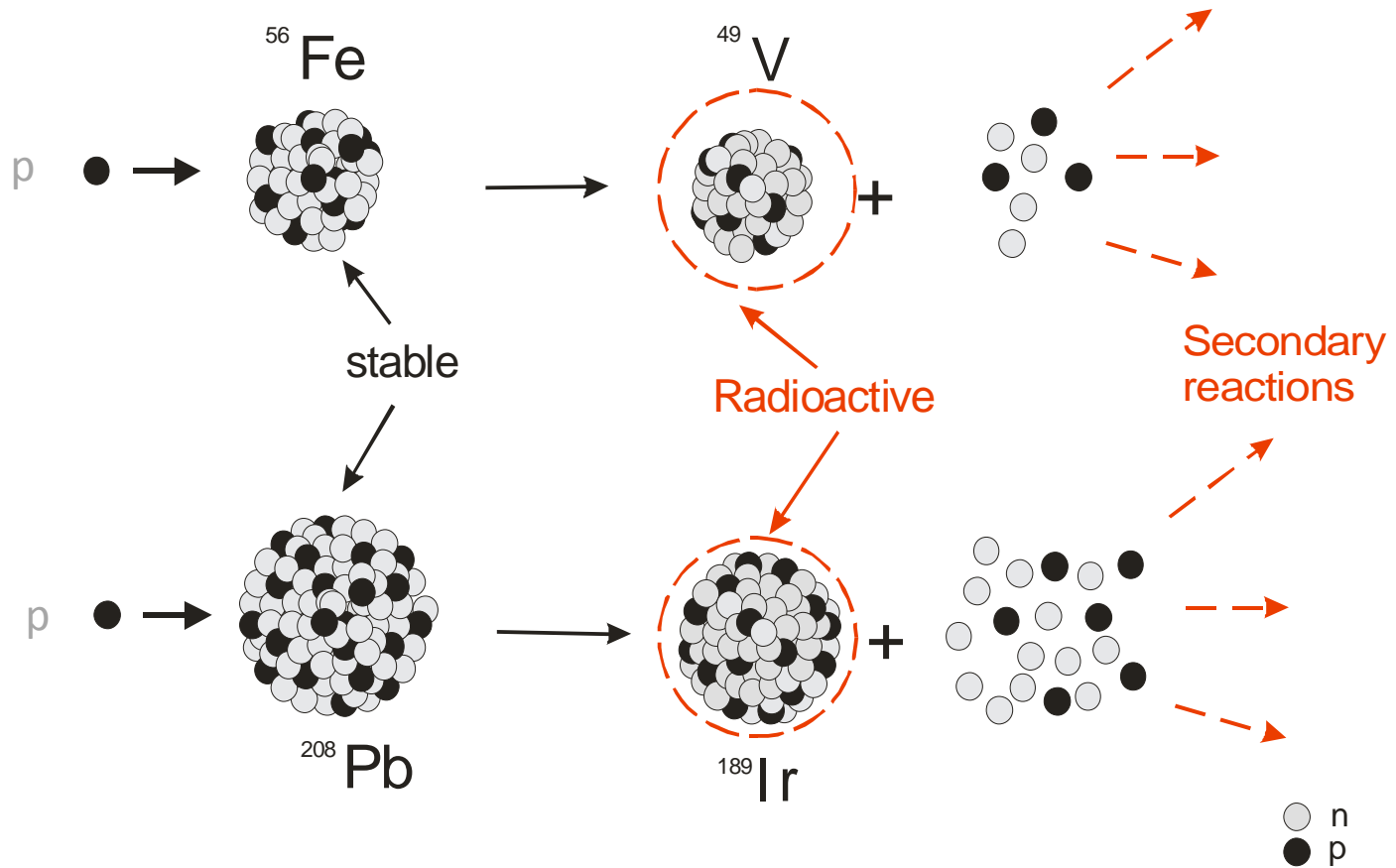


**Fission**

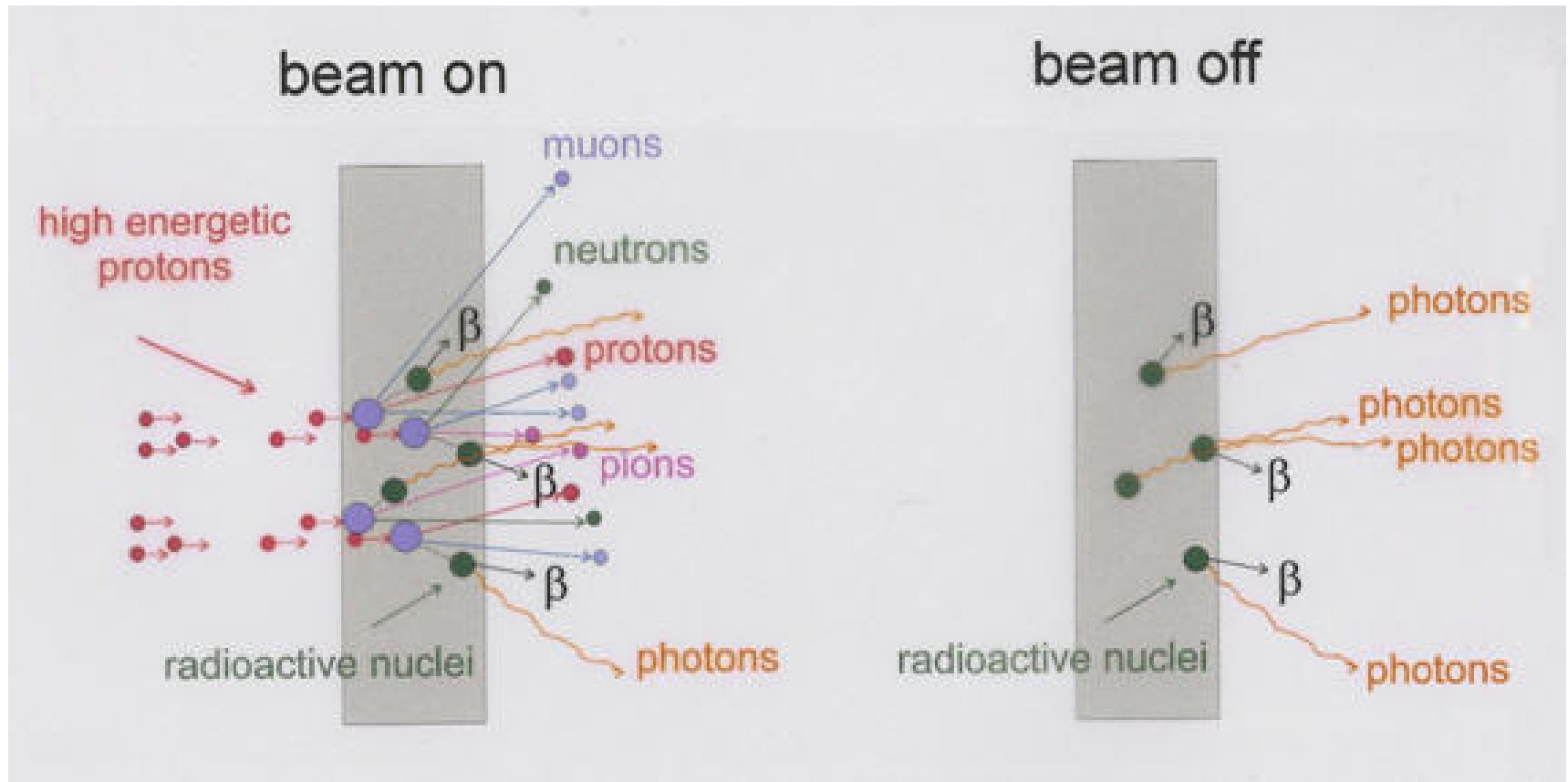


**Spallation**

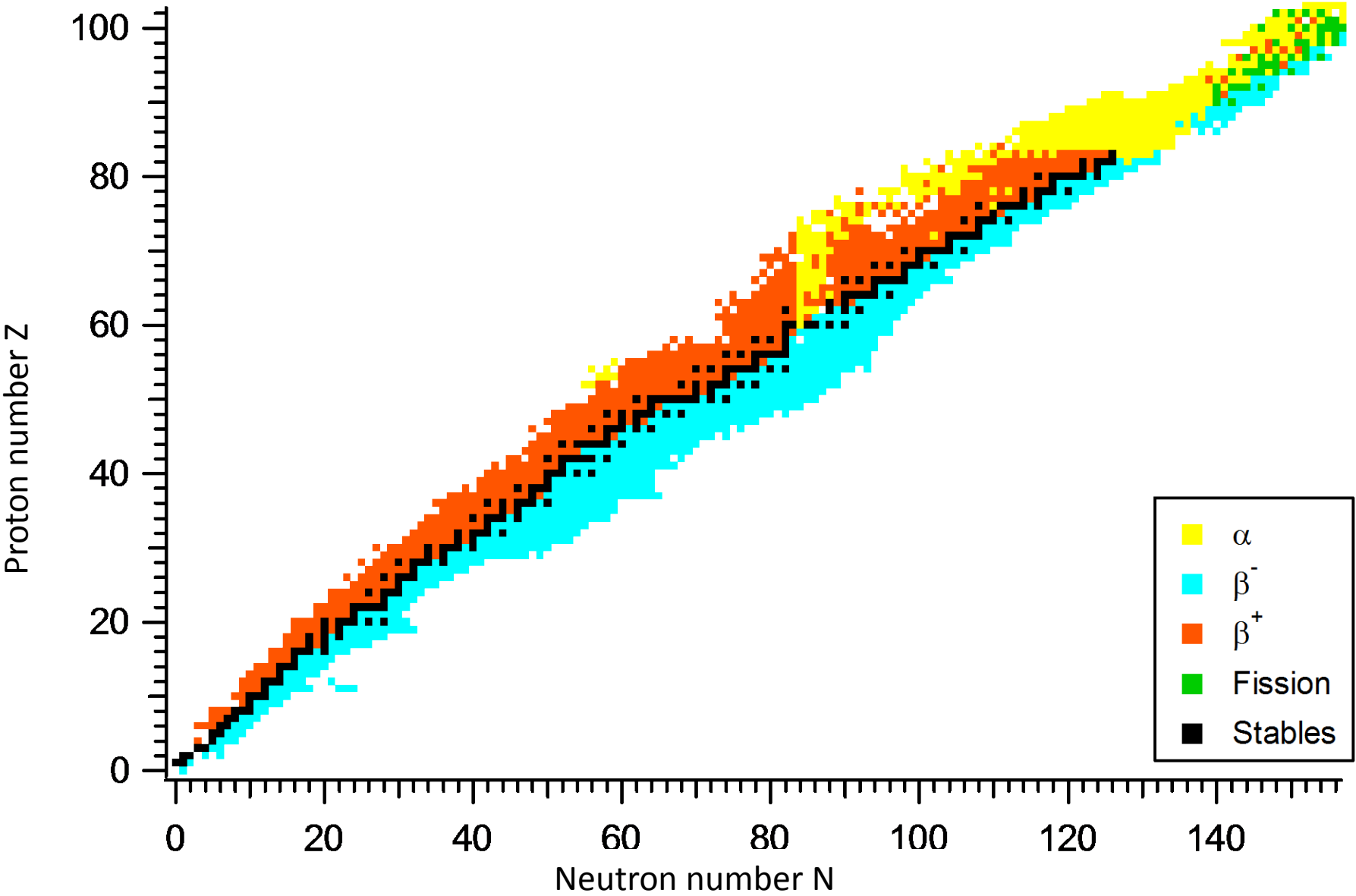
# Spallation

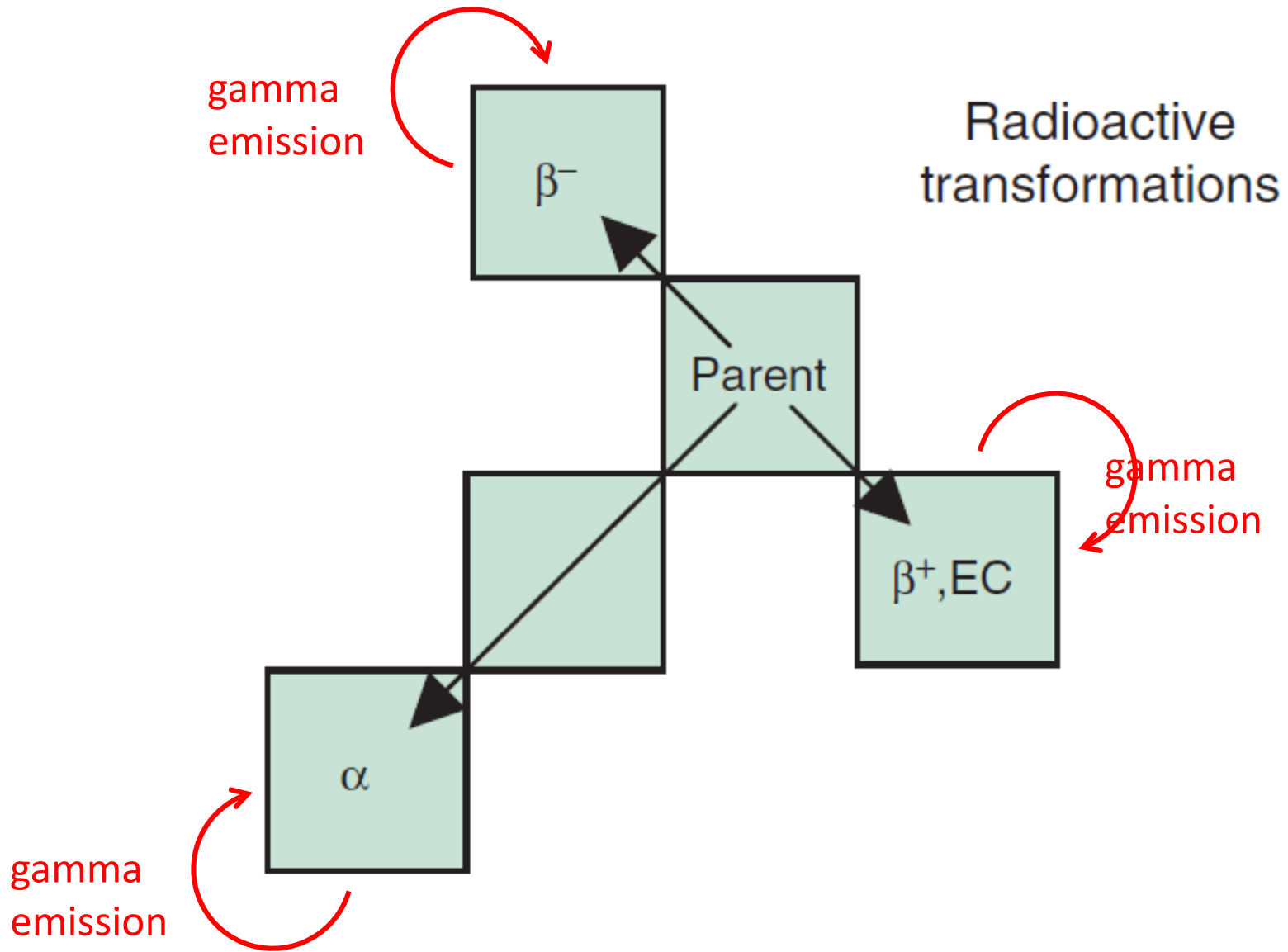


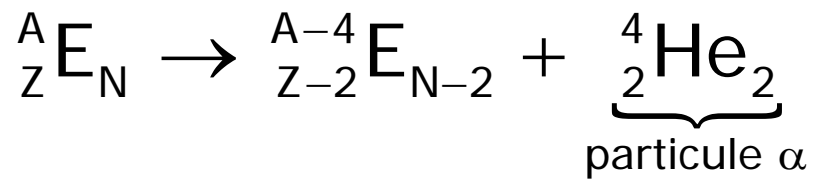
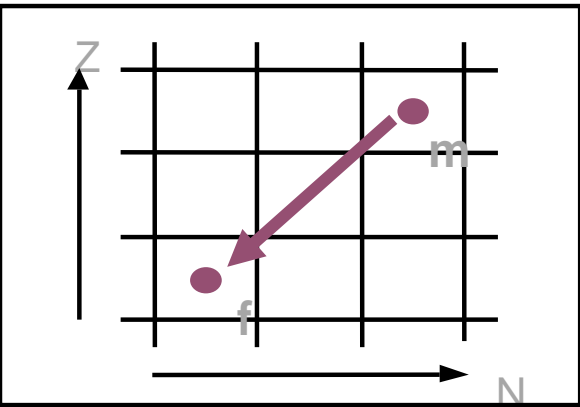
# Activation



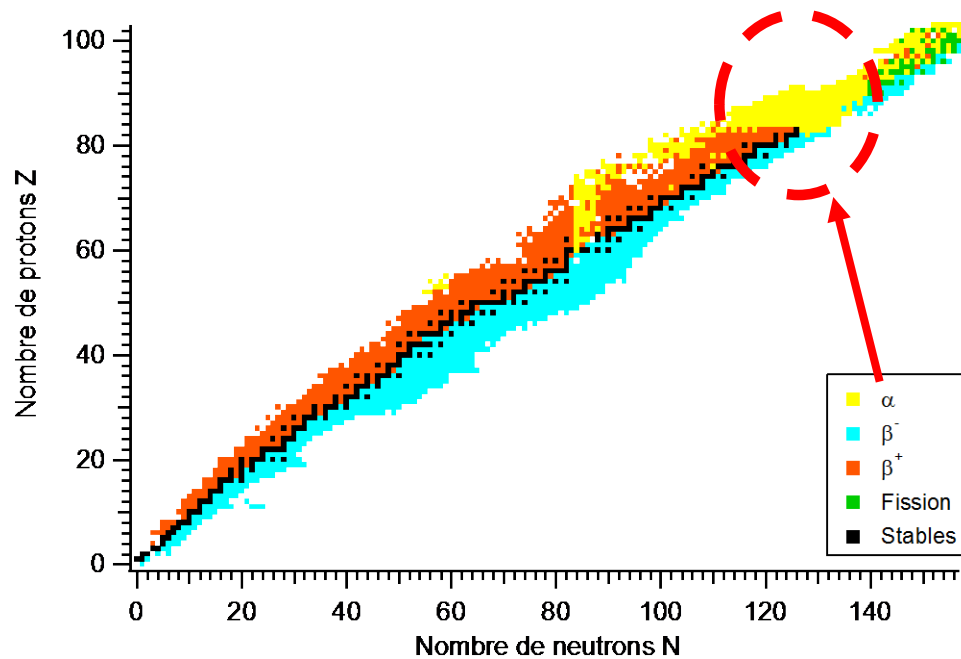
How do you move on the chart with the different decays?







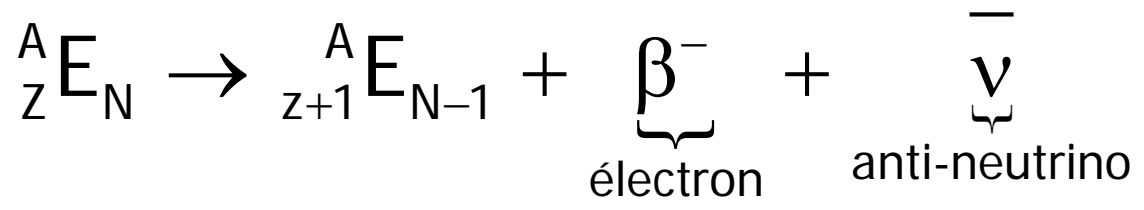
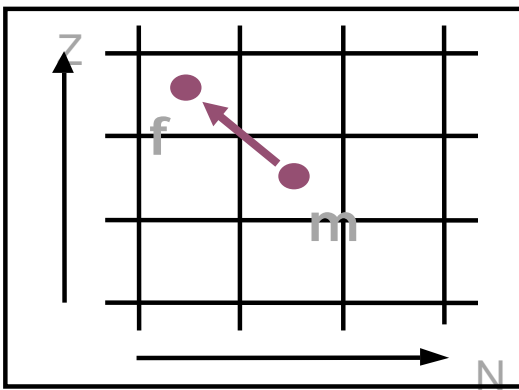
:  
2 neutrons + 2 protons



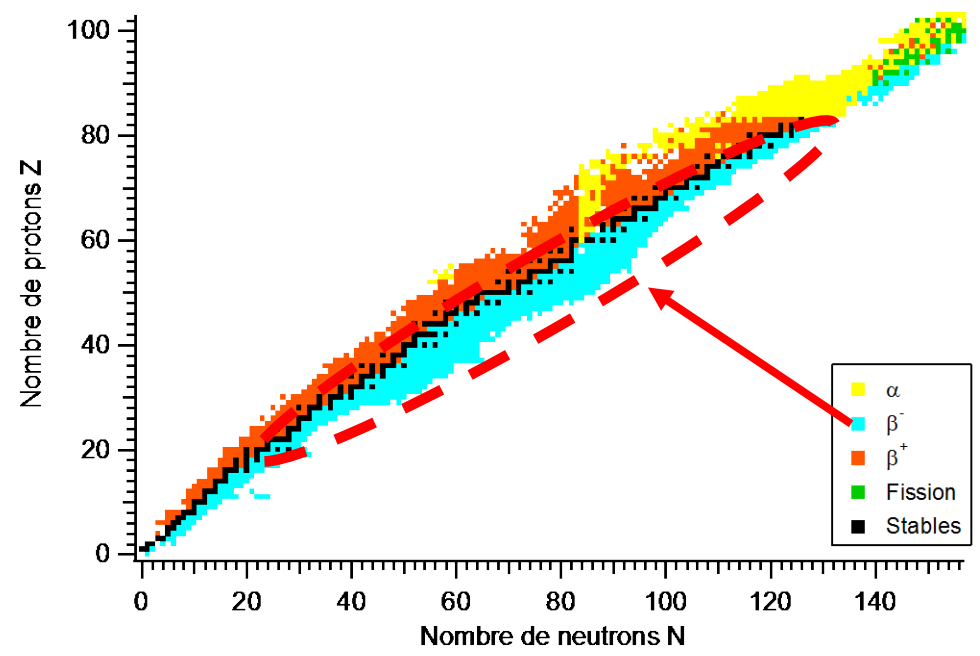
Rn-222

Am-241

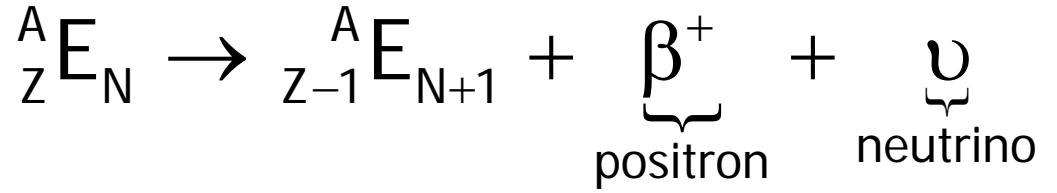
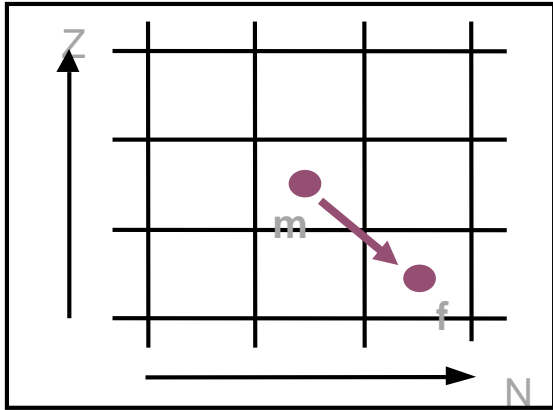
U-238



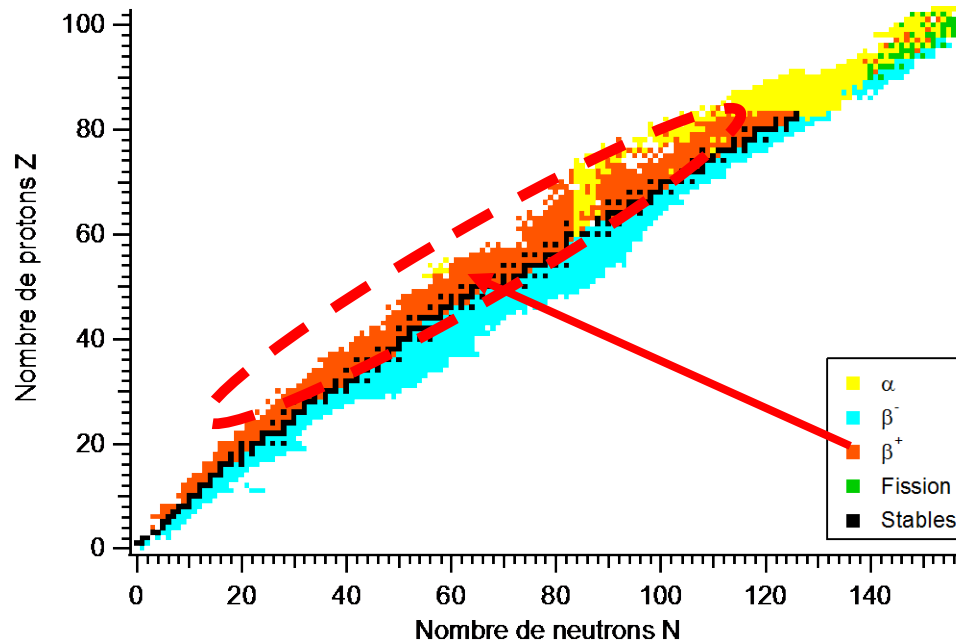
Neutron turns into a proton







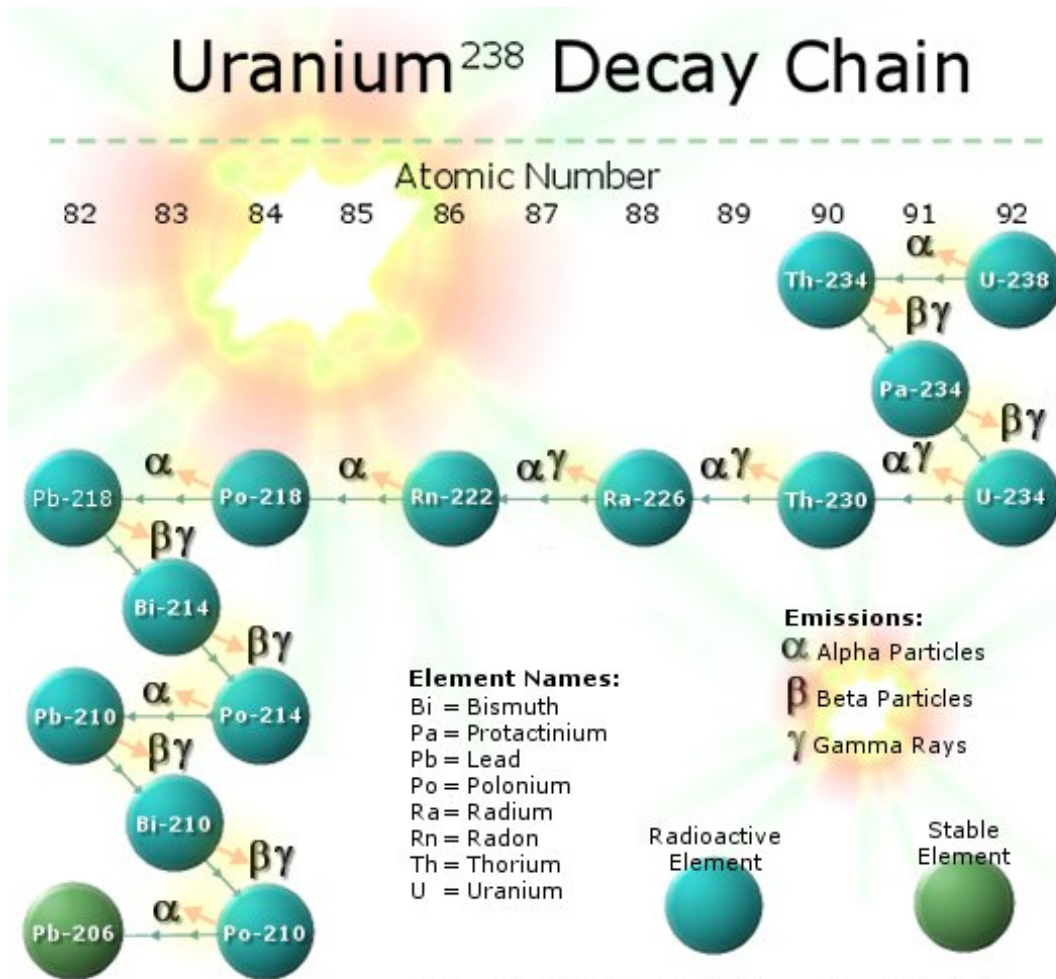
Proton turns into a neutron

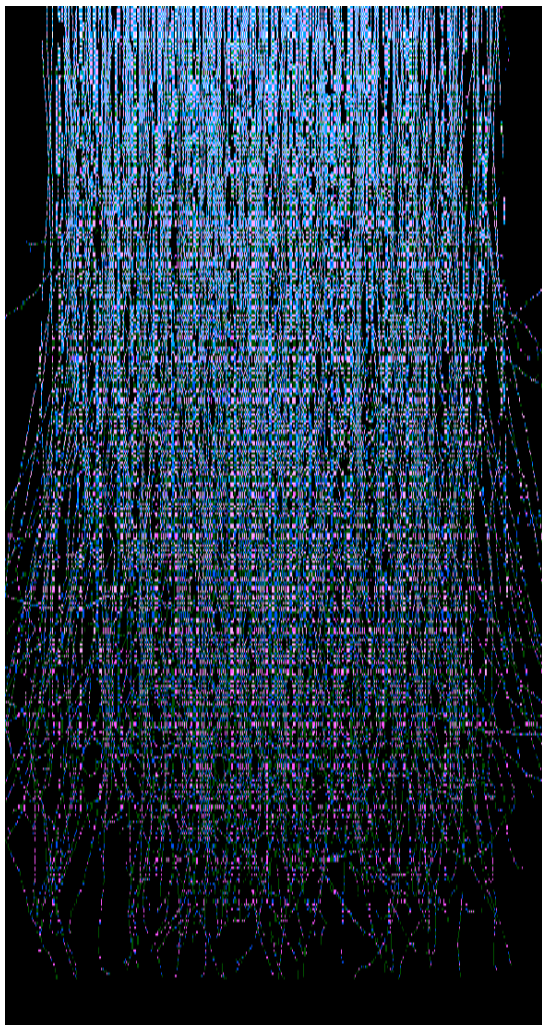


${}^{11}\text{C}, {}^{13}\text{N}, {}^{15}\text{O}, {}^{18}\text{F}, {}^{124}\text{I}$

# Radioactivity

$\alpha$ ,  $\beta^\pm$ ,  $\gamma$





**Prof François Bochud**

Institute of Radiation physics (IRA)

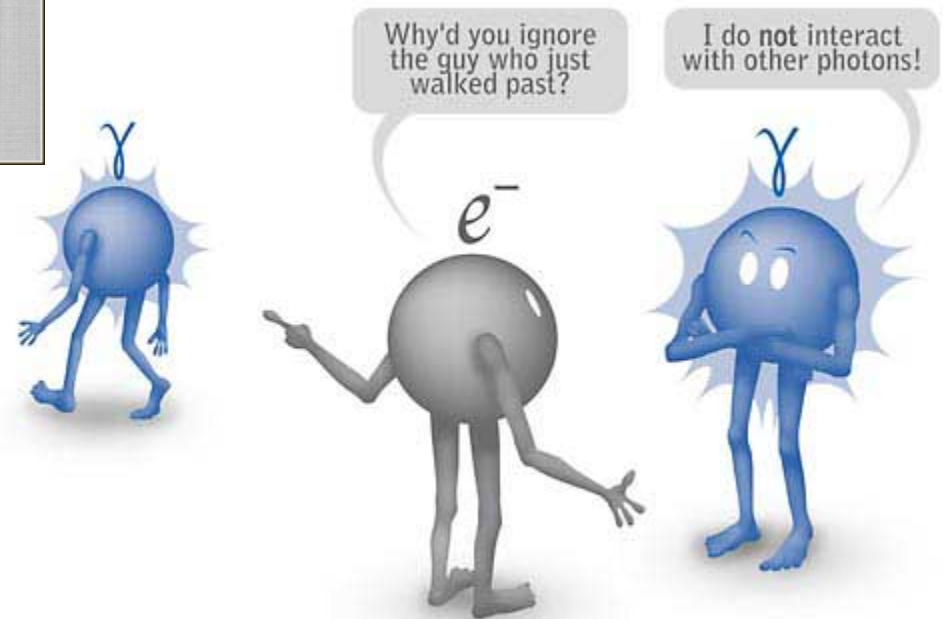
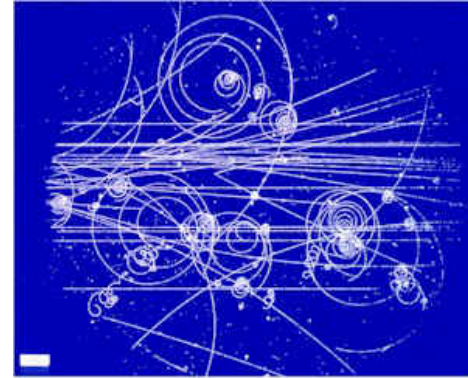
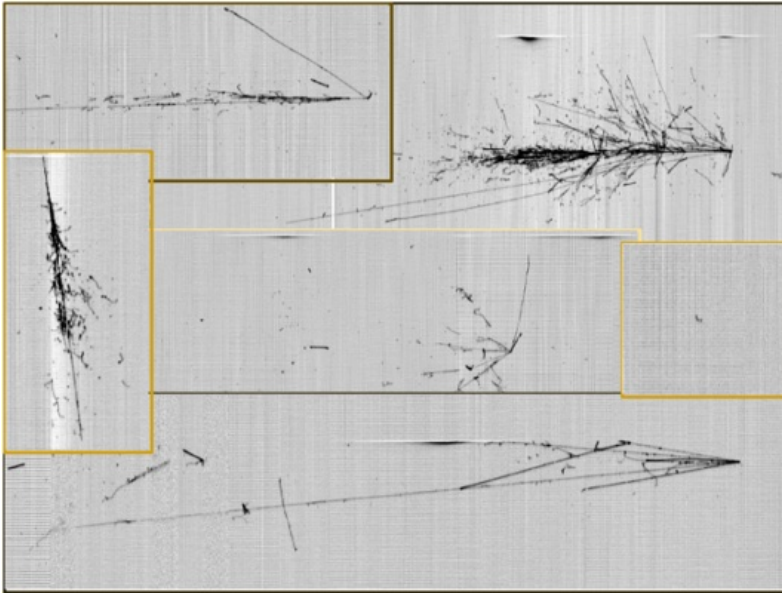
UNIL - CHUV

Master of Science EPF-ETH degree in **Nuclear Engineering**  
RPRA : **Radiation protection** and radiation applications

*Basis of radiation physics*

**Interactions of charged  
particles**

# Interaction with matter





ionizing radiation

# Ionising radiation

High energy radiation are able to remove electrons from atoms, which is why they are called "ionising radiation".

Electromagnetic radiation can cause ionisation if the wavelength is less than 100 nanometers, because in these limits, the photon has enough energy to eject an electron.

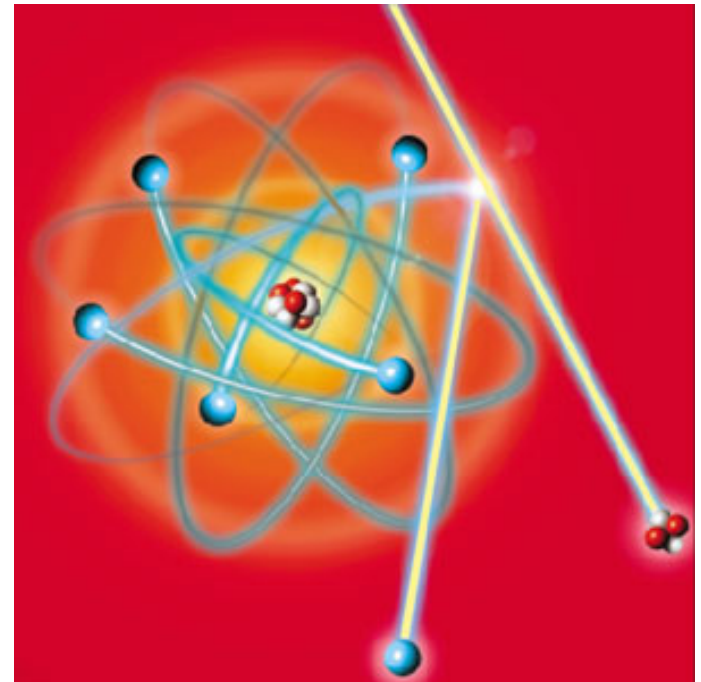
Several types of ionising radiation:

1. **Particles**

(neutrons, protons,  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ )

2. **Electromagnetic waves**

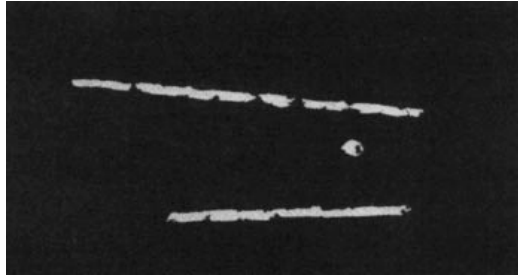
( $\gamma$ , X-rays)



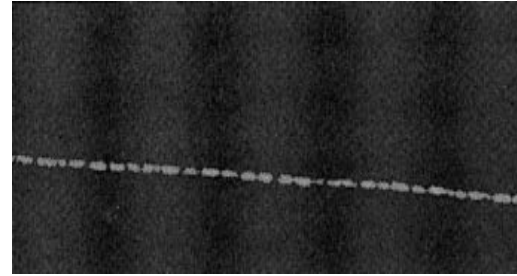


# Interaction avec la matière

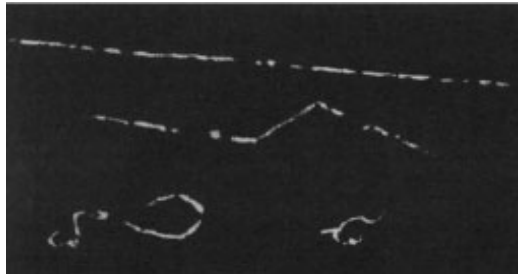
protons



muon



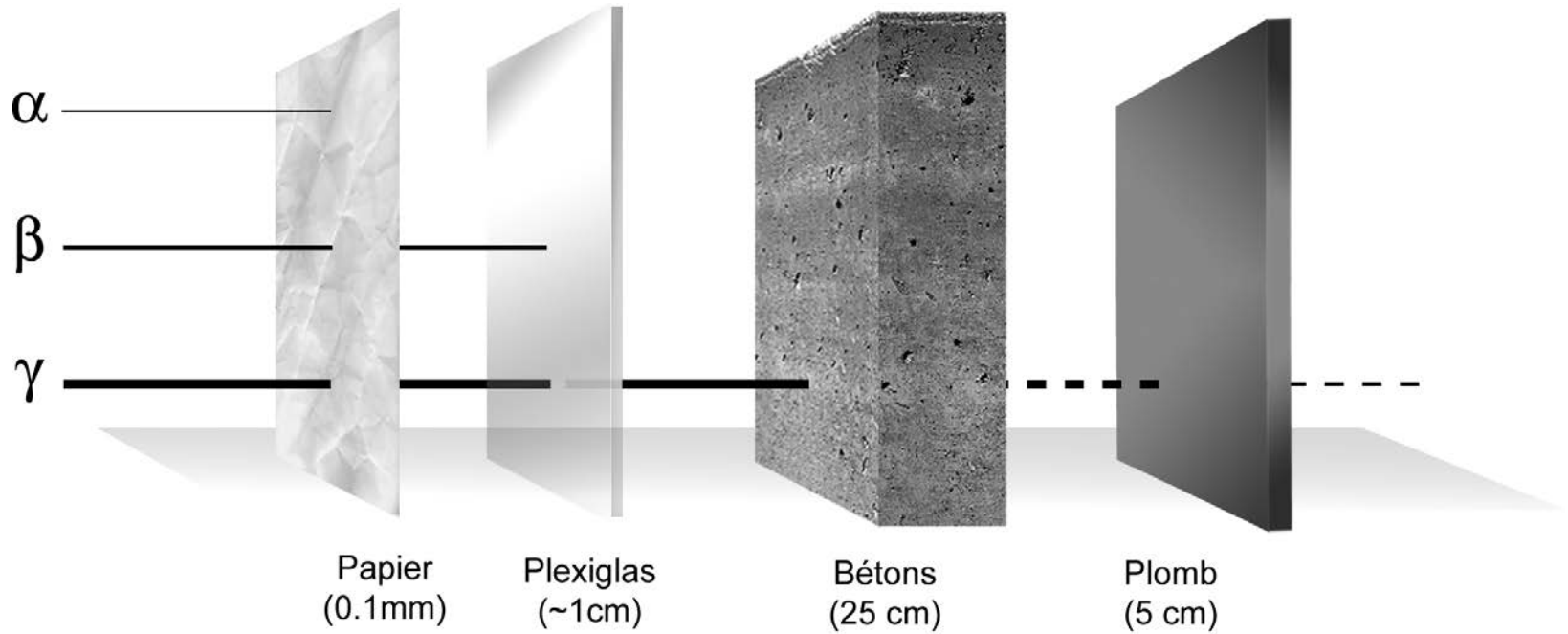
$\beta$



particule  $\alpha$



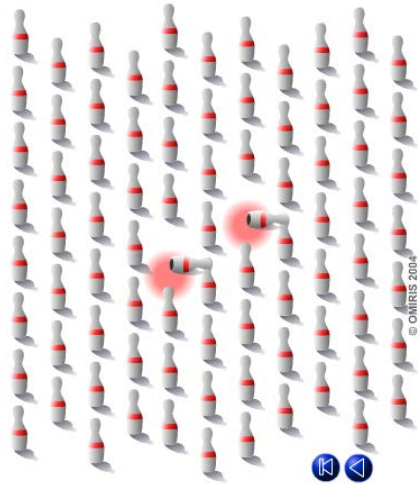
# Path length in matter



⇒ Radiation Protection

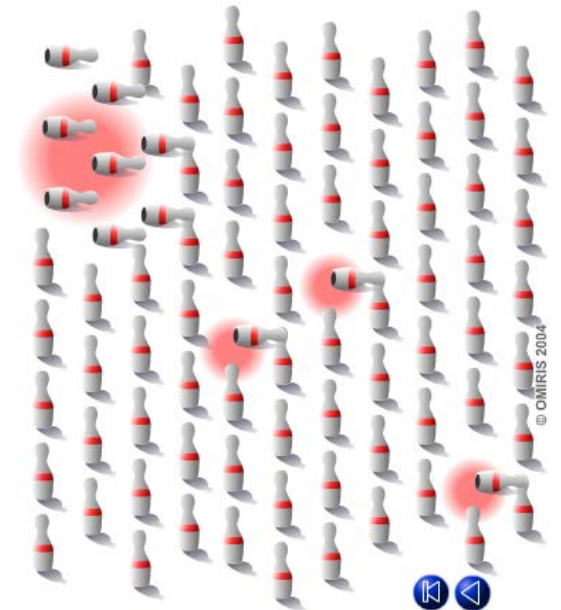


## Pouvoir de pénétration



$\alpha, \beta, \gamma$  ???

## Pouvoir de pénétration



⇒ Dosimetry

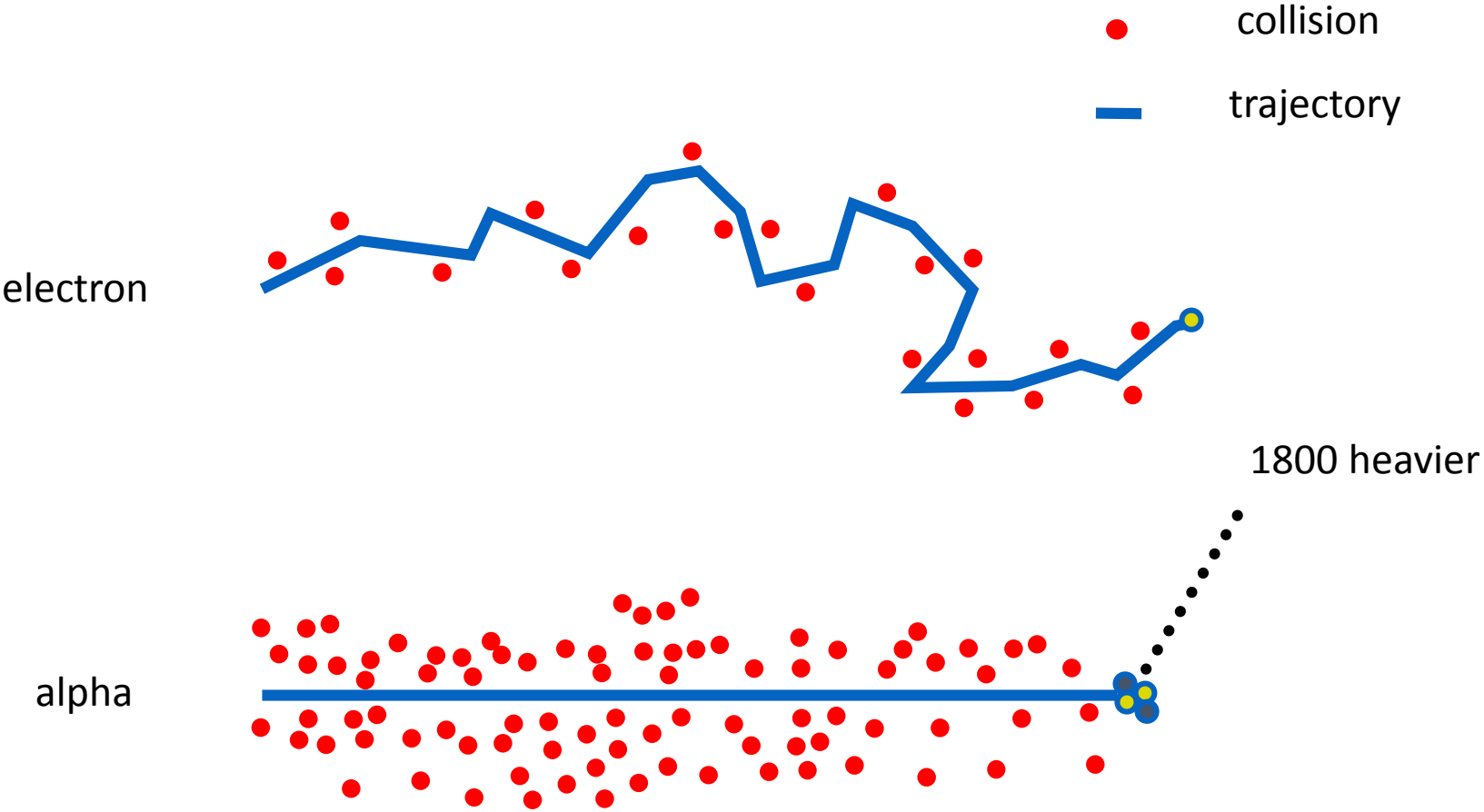
# Photon-matter interaction

---

	<b>Charged particles</b>	<b>Non-charged particles</b>
<i>Typical example</i>	Electrons, protons, $\alpha$	Neutrons, RX, $\gamma$
<i>Slowing down</i>	Continuous	Random mechanism
<i>Frequency of interactions</i>	Many small interactions	Long journey without interaction
<i>Quantity of energy loss</i>	Weak for each interaction	Major modification (production of charged particles)
<i>Path</i>	Finite	Exponential weakening

---

# Charged particles interactions



# Electrons

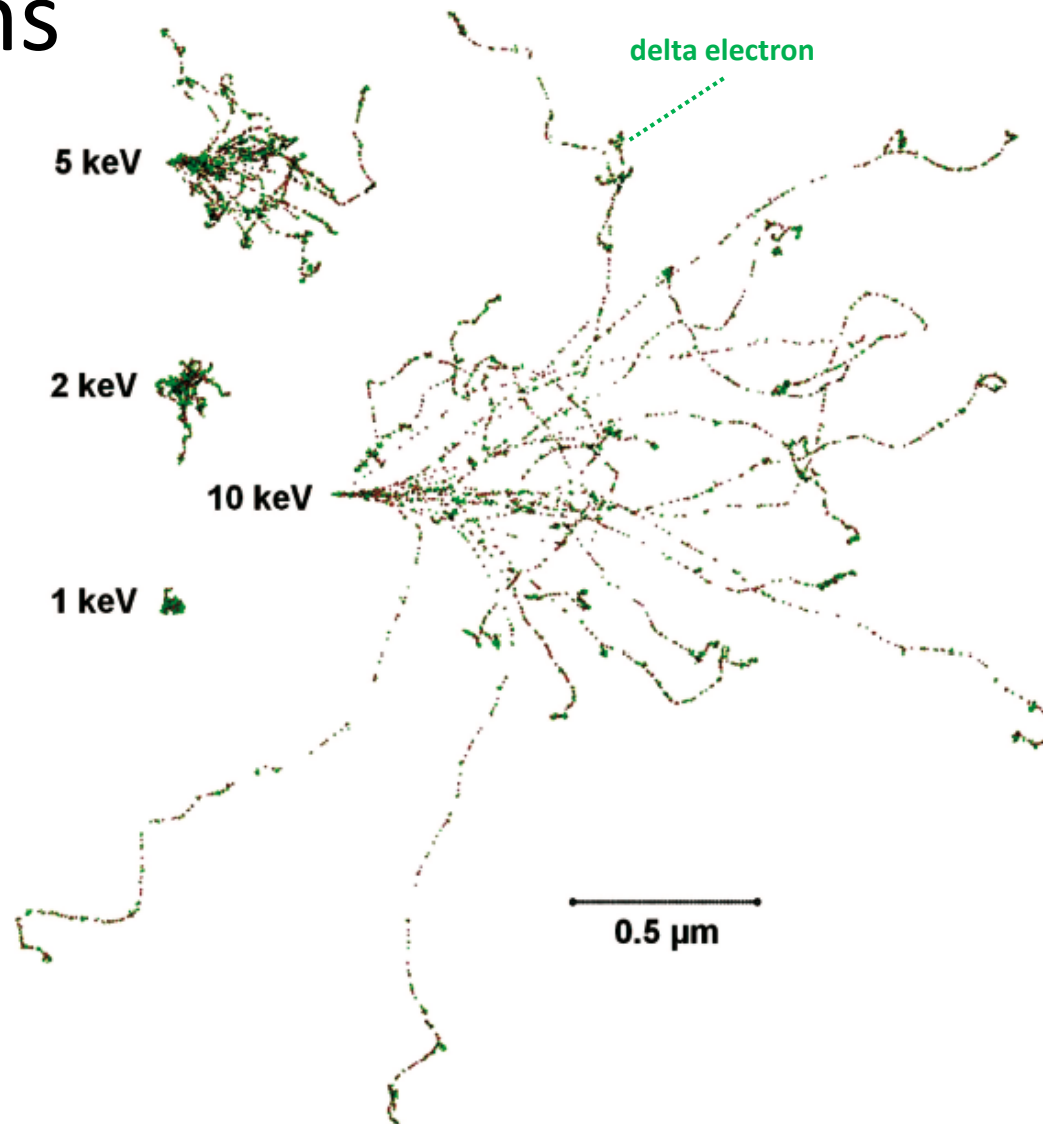
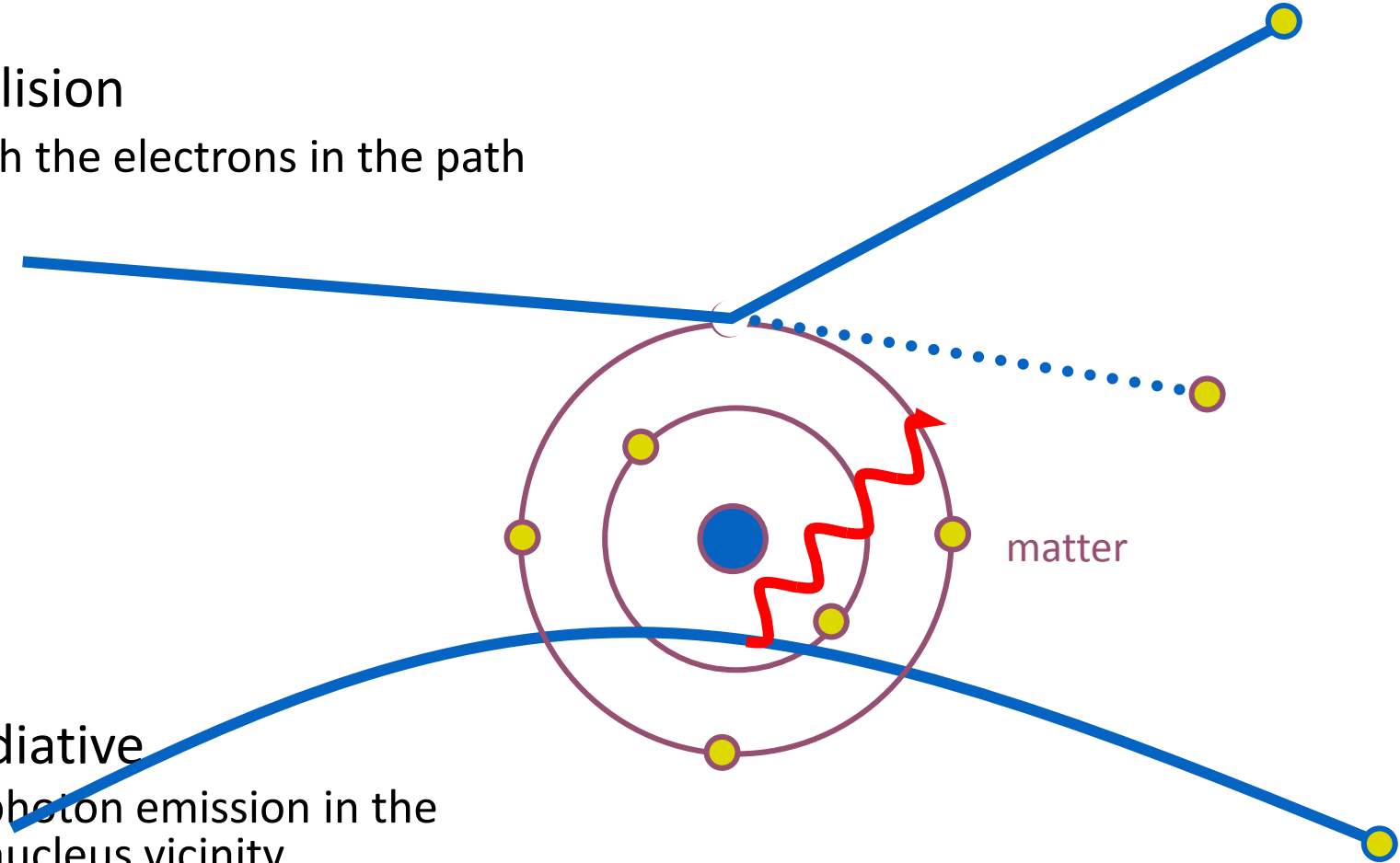


Figure 2.3. Twenty randomly generated electron tracks for initial kinetic energies of 1 keV, 2 keV, 5 keV, and 10 keV. Red points represent ionizations, and green points represent excitations. All tracks of the same energy start at the same point and initially proceed in the same direction (left to right in the figure).

# Electron slowing down

## 1. Collision

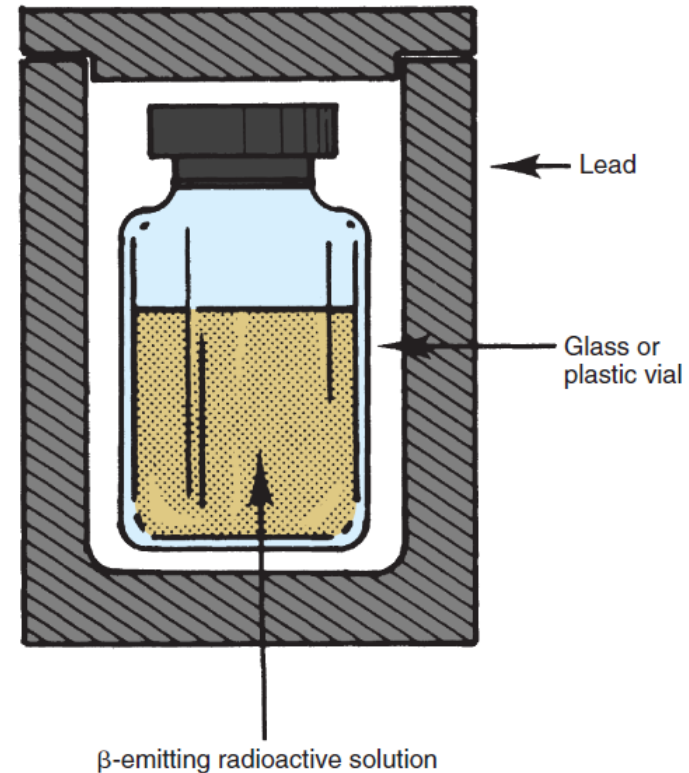
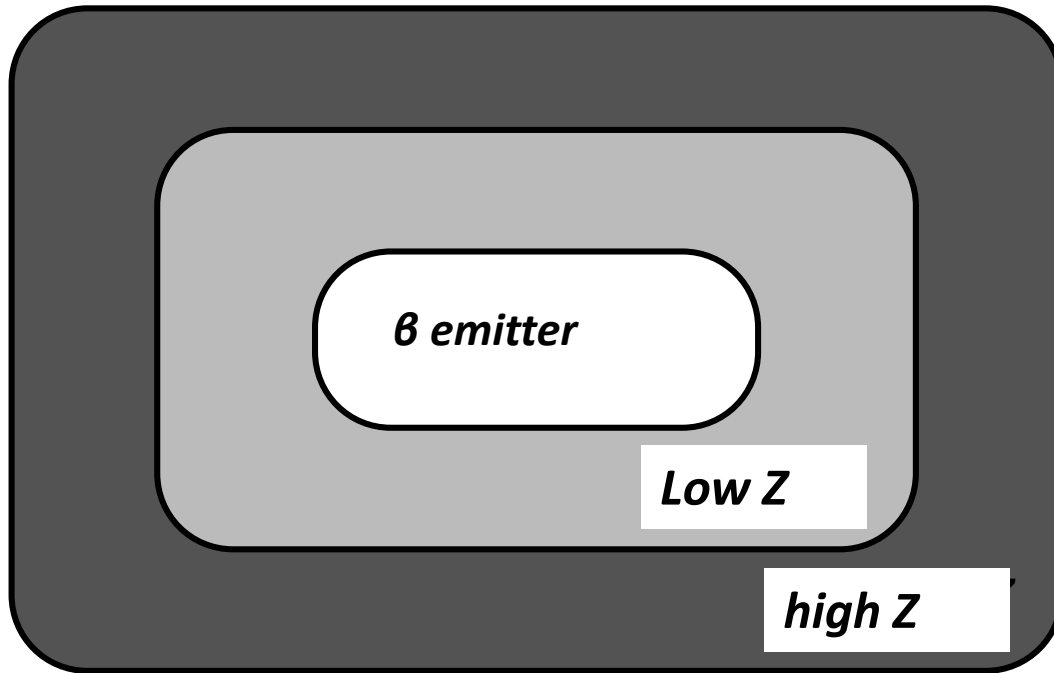
- with the electrons in the path



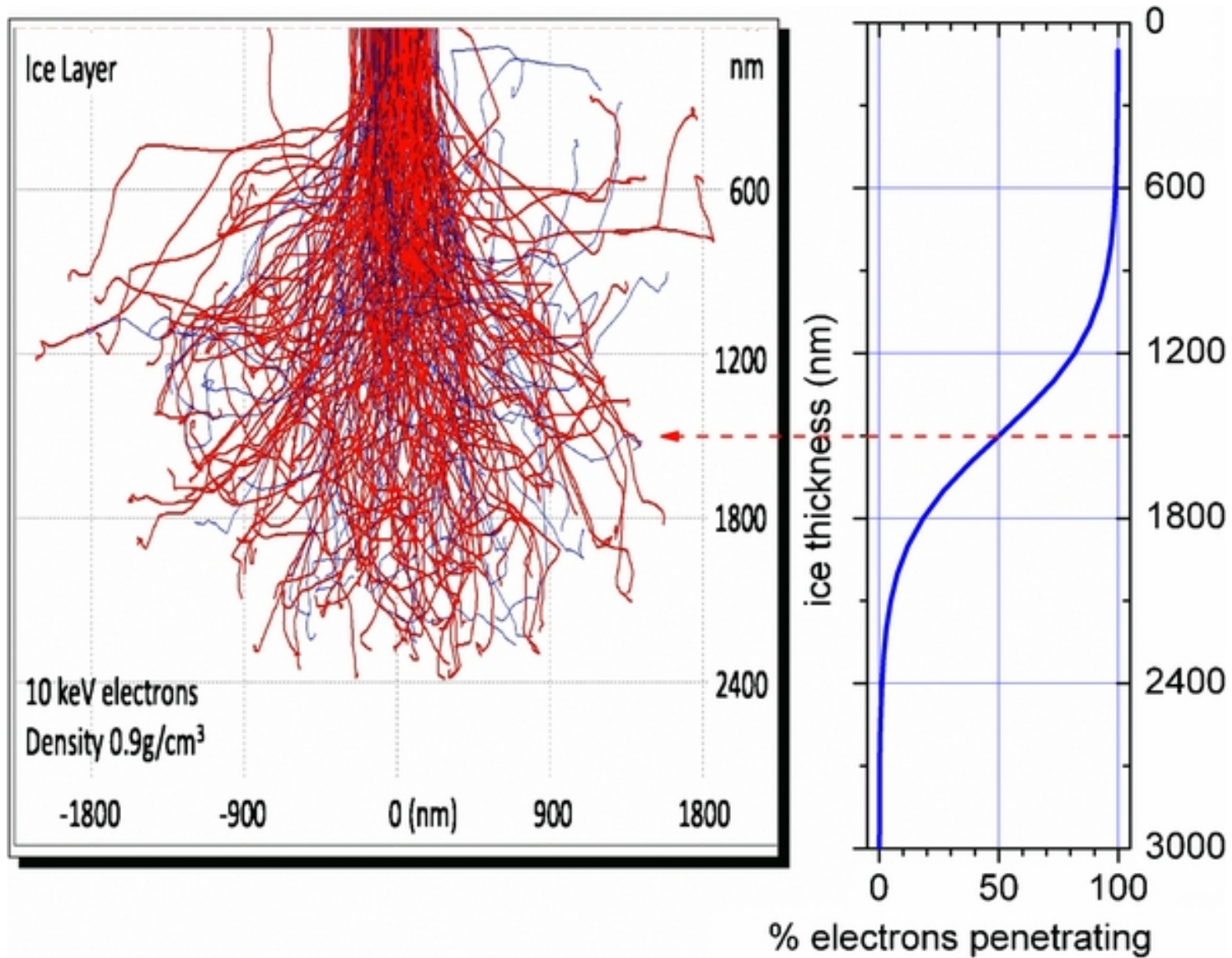
## 2. Radiative

- photon emission in the nucleus vicinity (bremsstrahlung)

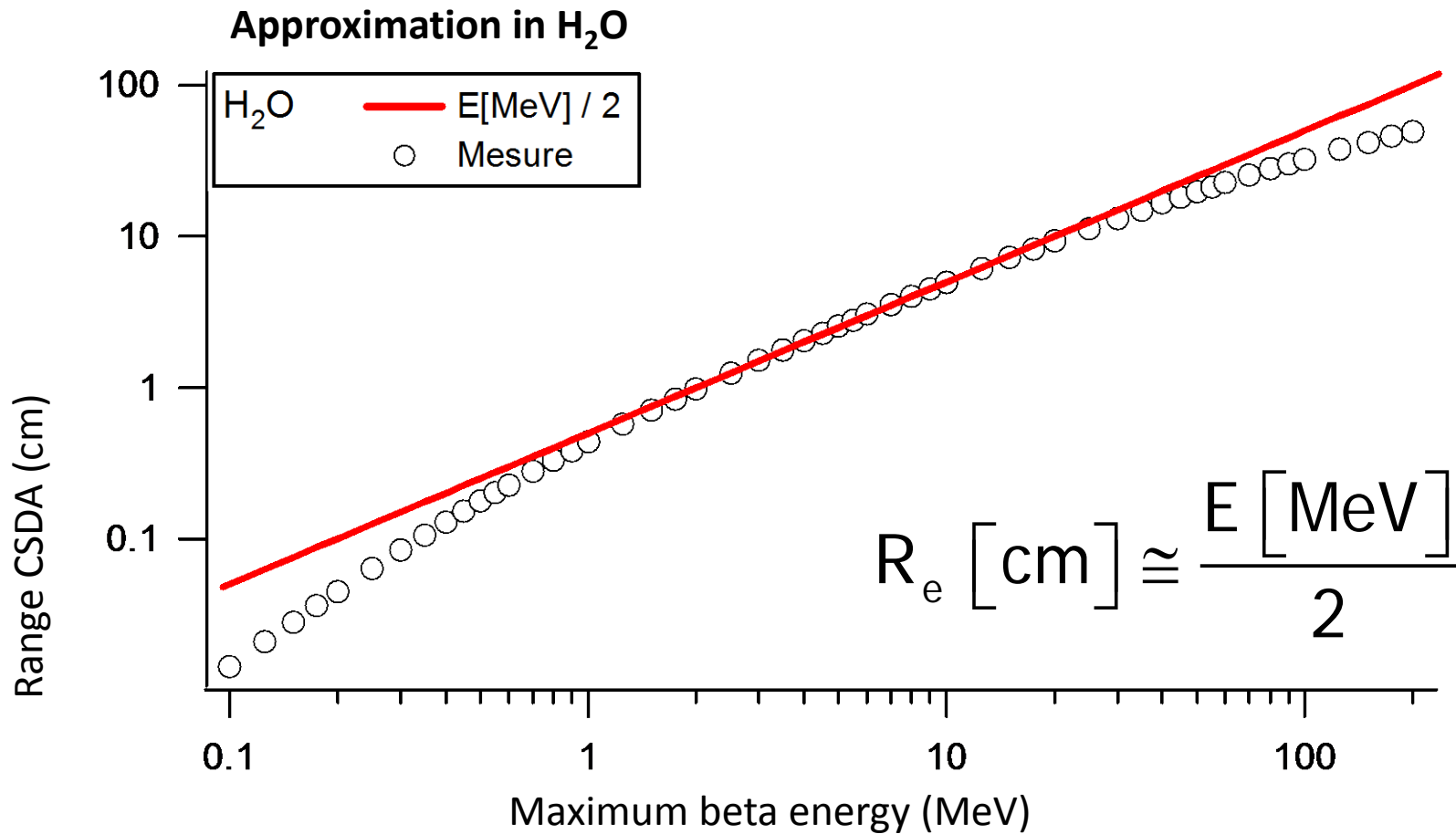
# Protection against beta radiation



**FIGURE 6-3** Preferred arrangement for shielding energetic  $\beta$ -emitting radioactive solution. Glass or plastic walls of a vial stop the  $\beta$  particles with minimum bremsstrahlung production, and a lead container absorbs the few bremsstrahlung photons produced.



# Electrons range



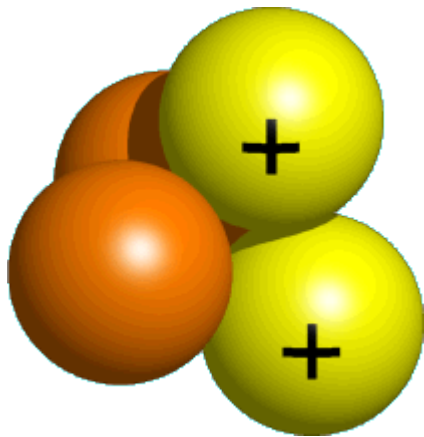


# Exercise: Electron range in matter



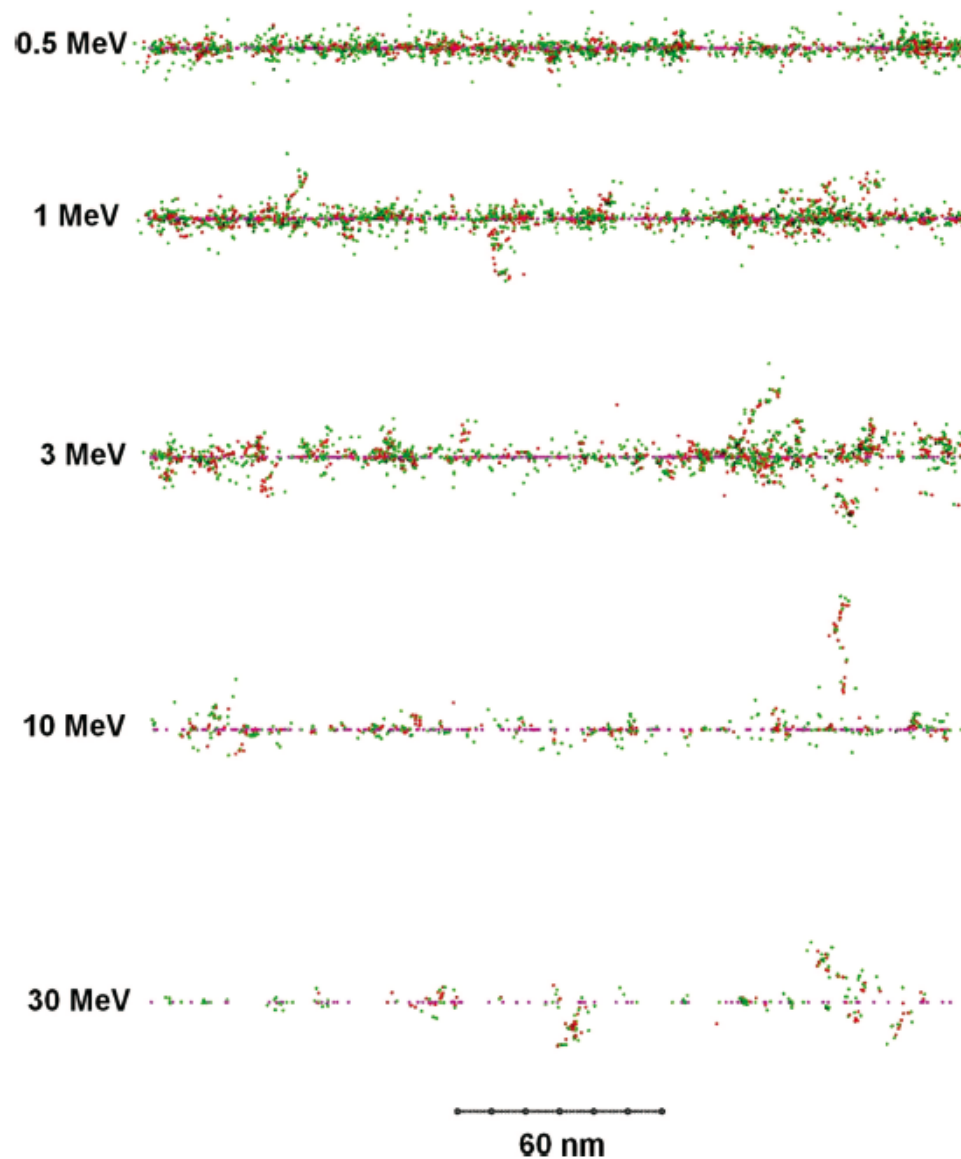
What is the maximum range of the electrons emitted by P-32 in tissue?  
( $E_{\max} = 1.7 \text{ MeV}$ )

$$R_e [\text{cm}] \cong \frac{E [\text{MeV}]}{2} \approx 0.9 \text{ cm}$$



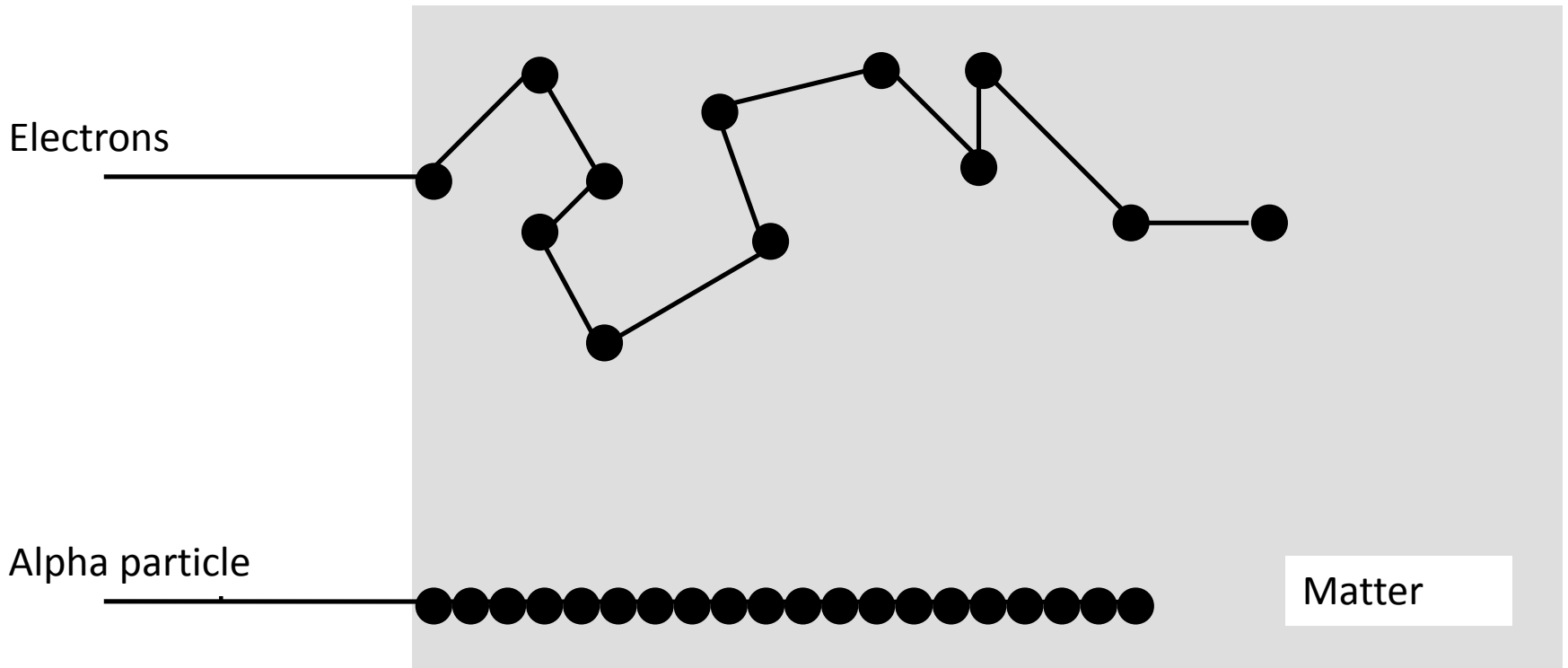
Heavy charged  
particles  
(protons ou alpha)

# Alphas



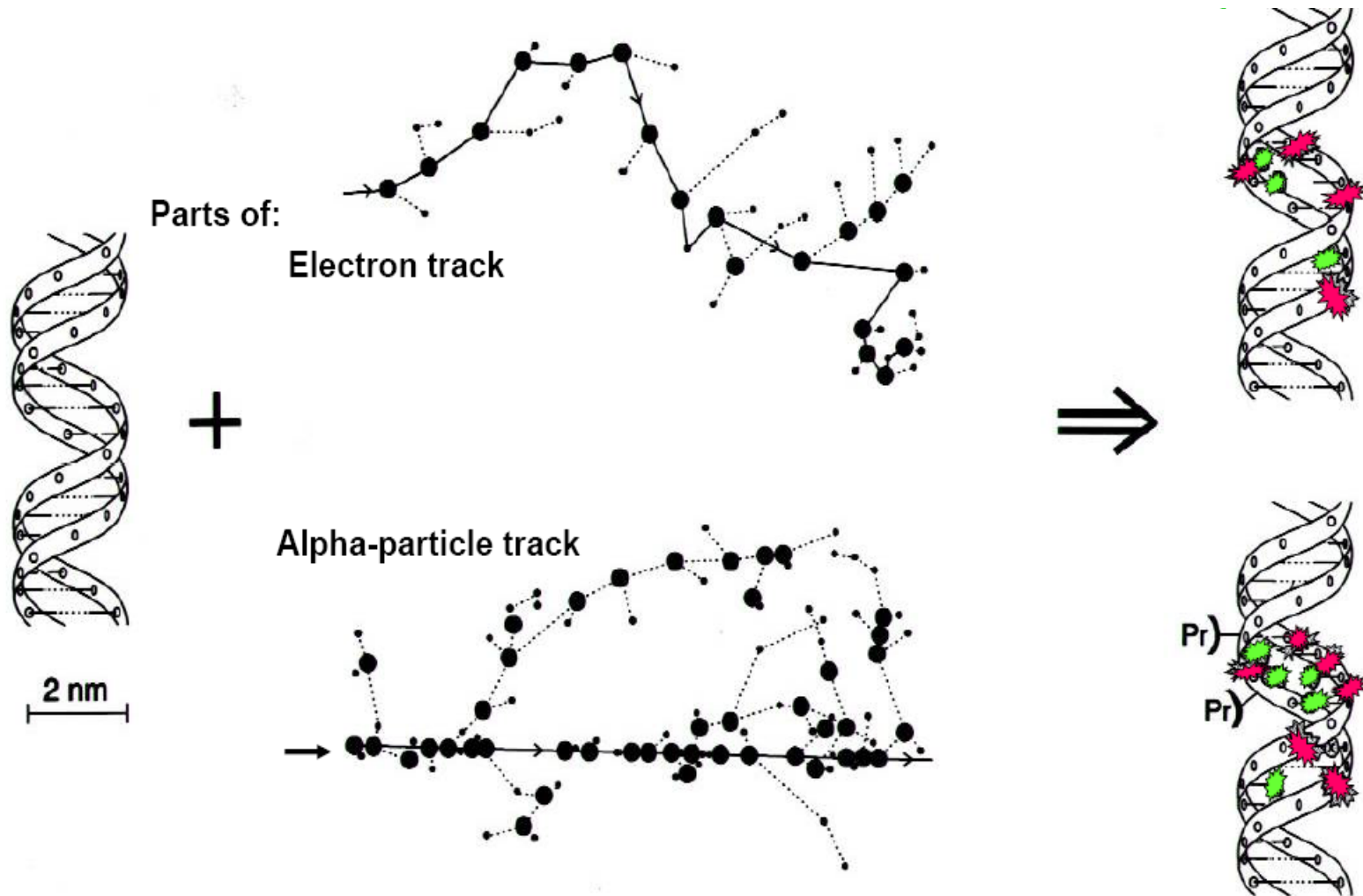
ICRU 86

Figure 2.5. Calculated 230 nm track segments for 0.5 MeV, 1 MeV, 3 MeV, 10 MeV, and 30 MeV alpha particles in water. Red points represent ionizations, and green points represent excitations.



Linear trajectory  
More energy lost per unit of distance

# Type of radiations



⇒ RadioBiology and Effects on humans

# Heavy charged particles

- Protection
  - Easily protected from alpha
    - paper or gloves
  - Range of 5 MeV alpha in soft tissue is about 0.03 mm (about 10 cells)
  - When direct contact → Important effects
    - **Must avoid ingestion!**



**Prof François Bochud**

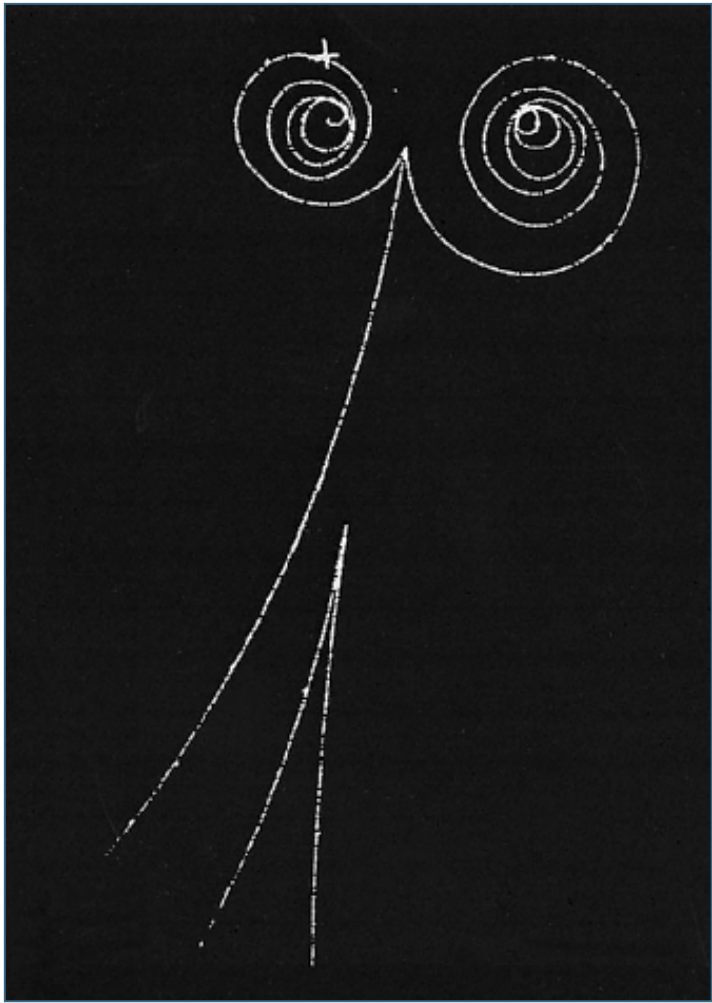
Institute of Radiation physics (IRA)

UNIL - CHUV

Master of Science EPF-ETH degree in **Nuclear Engineering**  
RPRA : **Radiation protection** and radiation applications

*Basis of radiation physics*

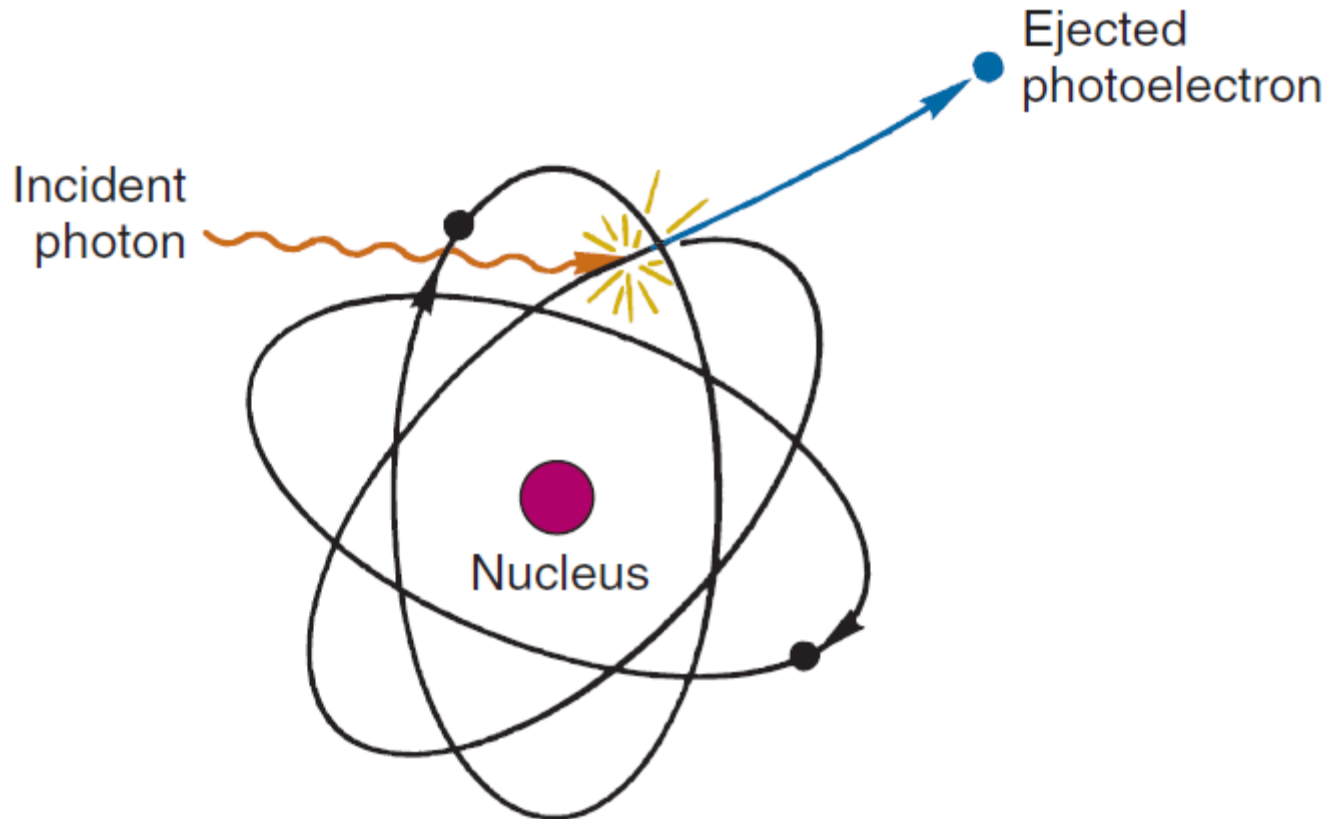
**Interactions of photons  
with matter**



Photons  
interactions  
with matter

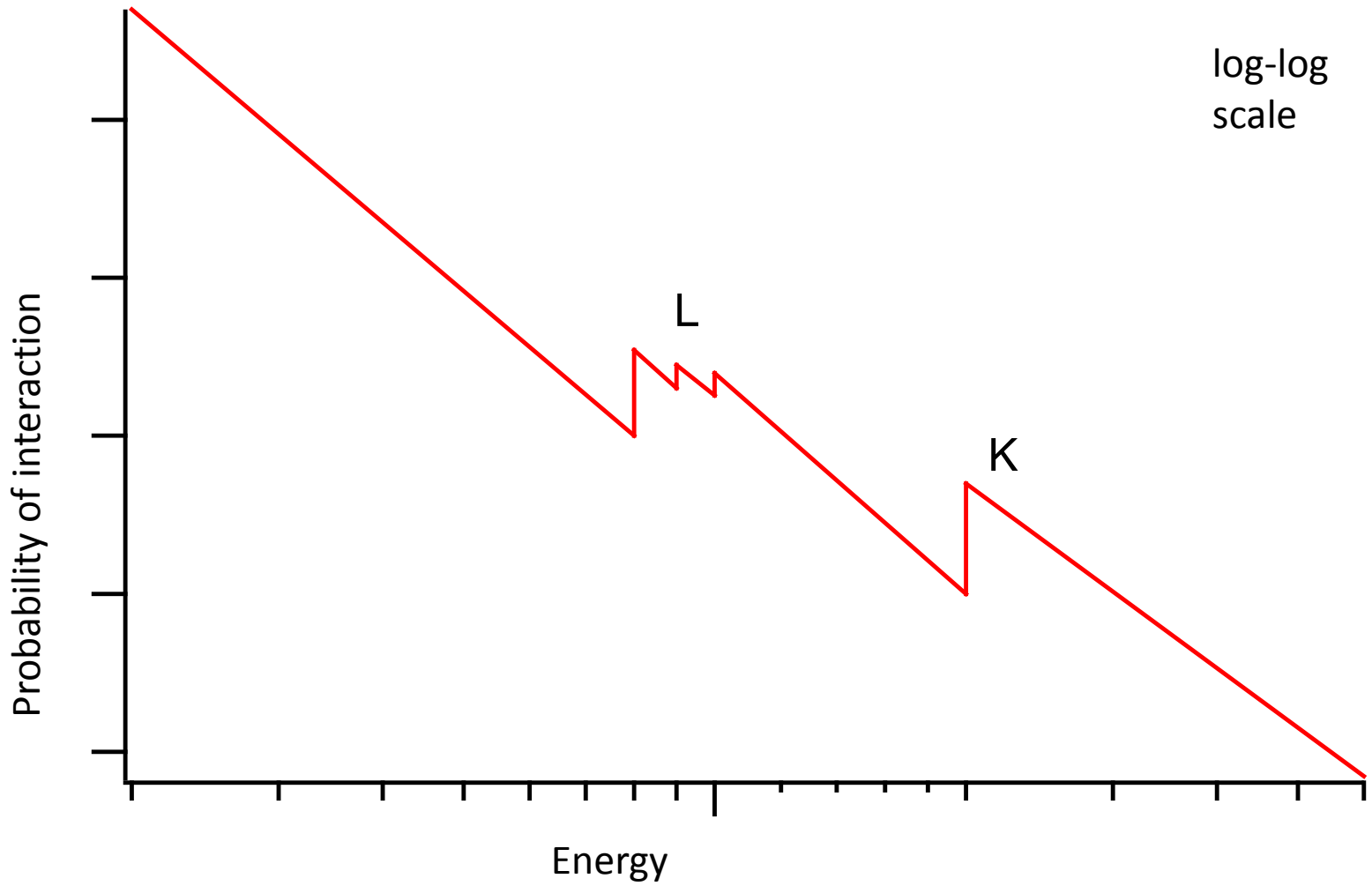


# Photoelectric effect

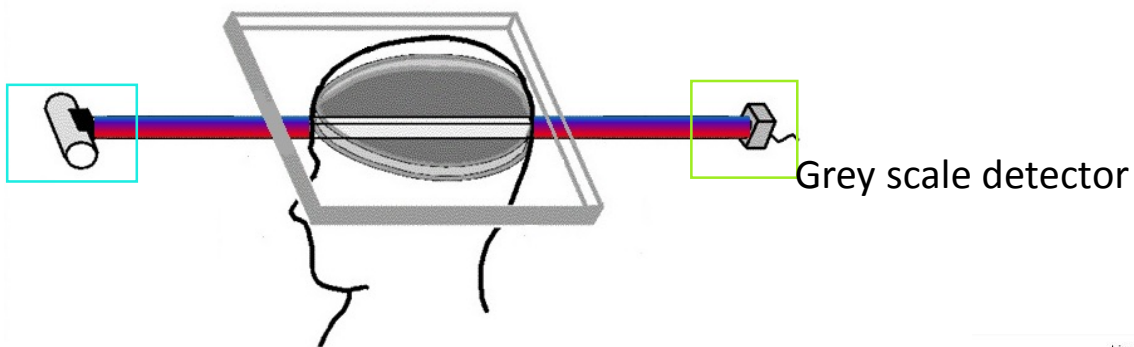


**FIGURE 6-11** Schematic representation of the photoelectric effect. The incident photon transfers its energy to a photoelectron and disappears.

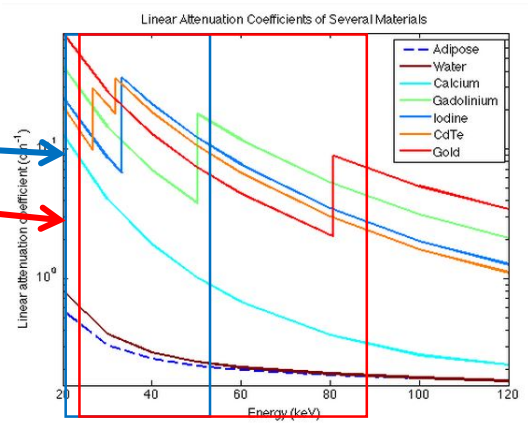
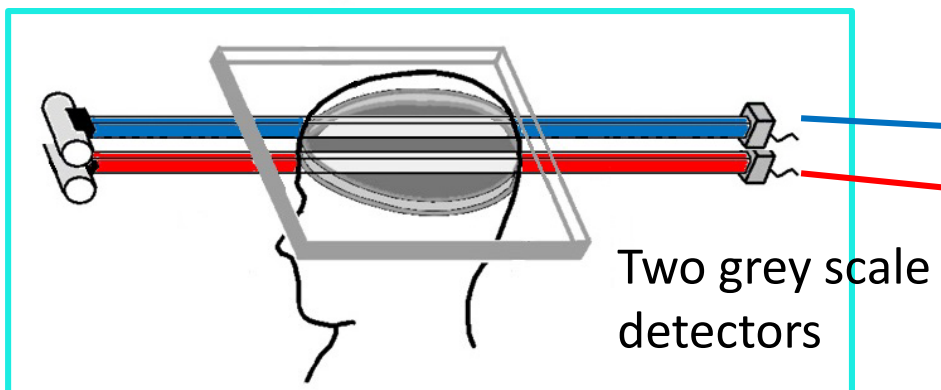
# Photoelectric effect



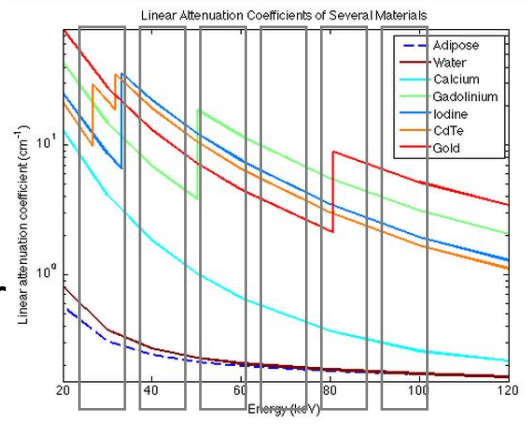
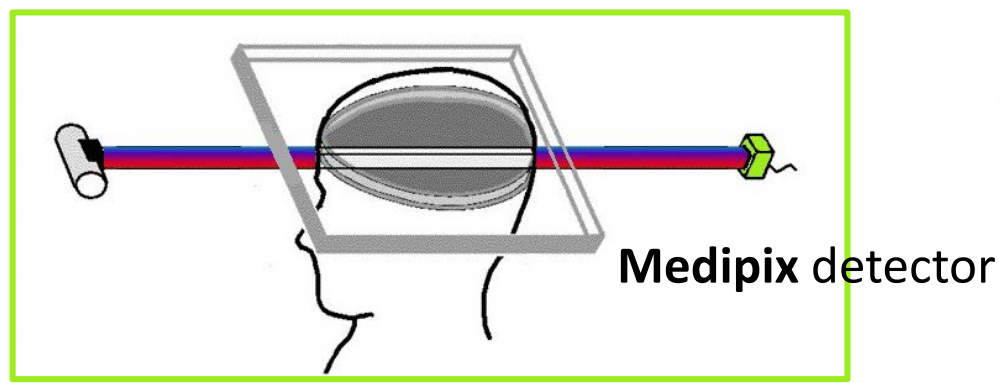
# Single energy CT



# Dual energy CT

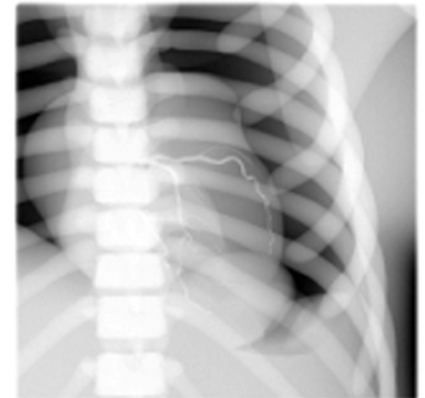


# MARS spectral CT

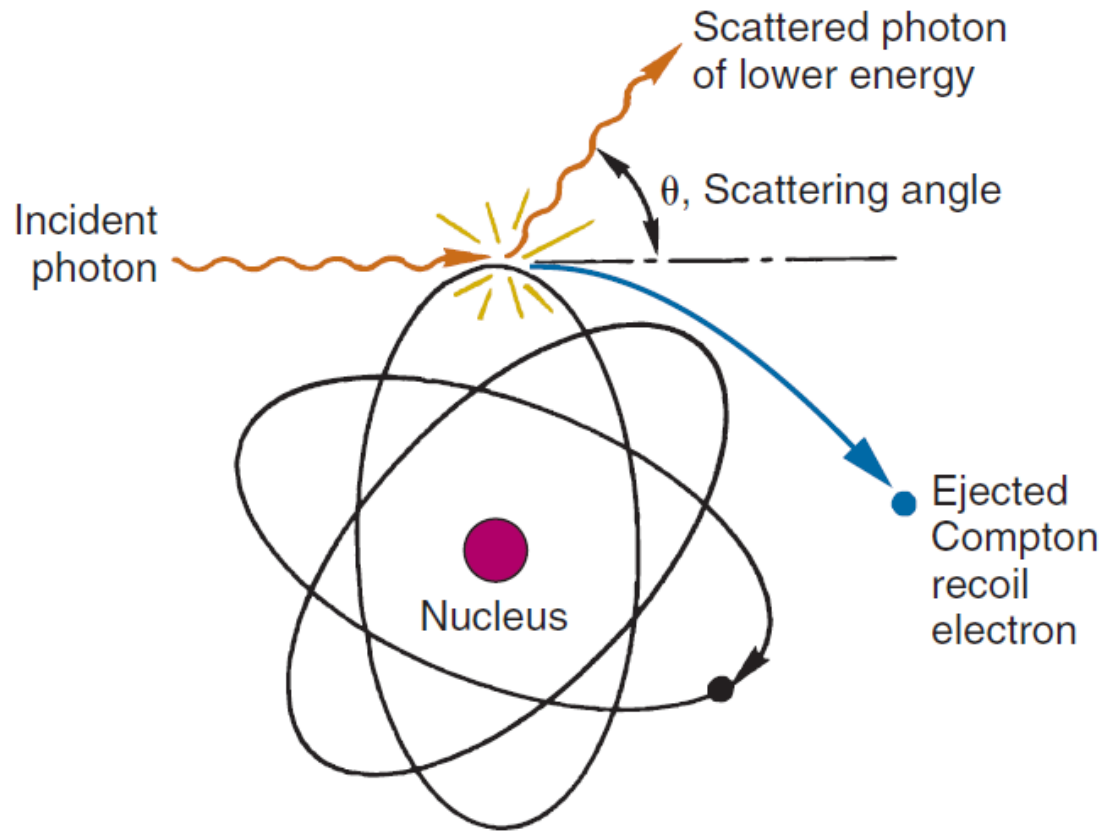


# Photoelectric effect

- Important at high  $Z$
- Important at low energies
- Jumps at electron binding energies
  - resonance phenomenon
- Fundamental effect for
  - Radiography
  - Lead shielding

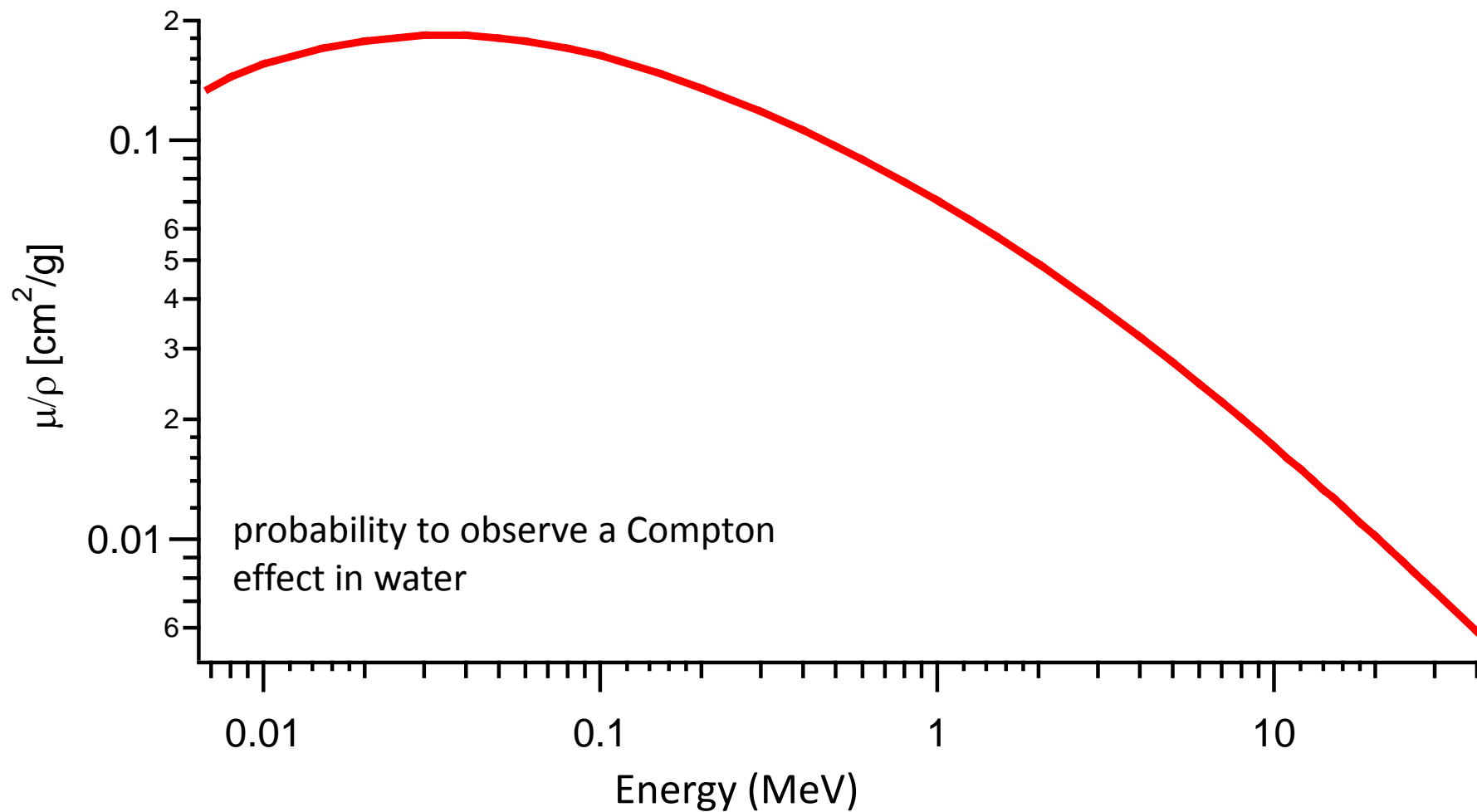


# Compton effect



**FIGURE 6-12** Schematic representation of Compton scattering. The incident photon transfers part of its energy to a Compton recoil electron and is scattered in another direction of travel ( $\theta$ , scattering angle).

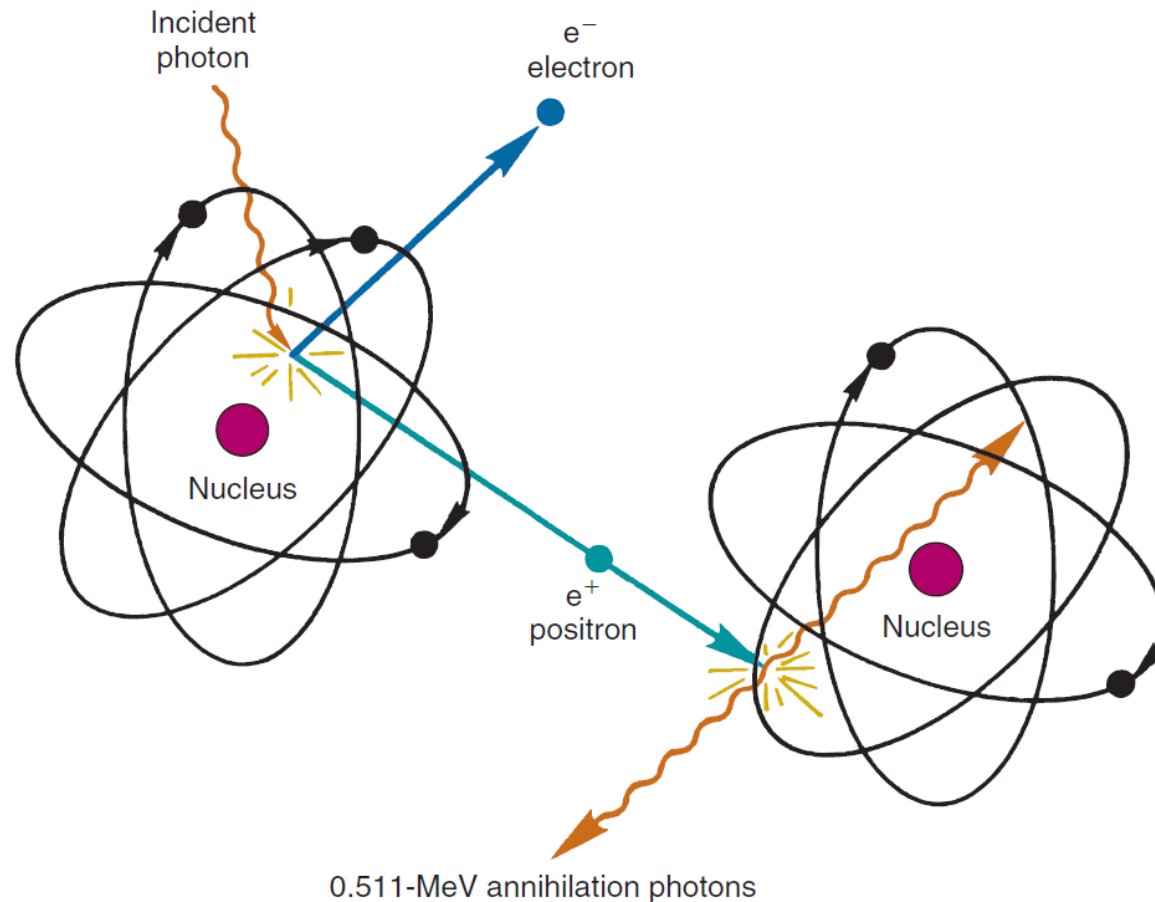
# Compton effect



# Compton effect

- Independent of Z
  - Depends on the number of electrons in matter  
(much less on how they are grouped within the atoms)
- Dominant medium energy
- Tend to diminish with energy
- At high energy
  - Particles tend to be projected forward

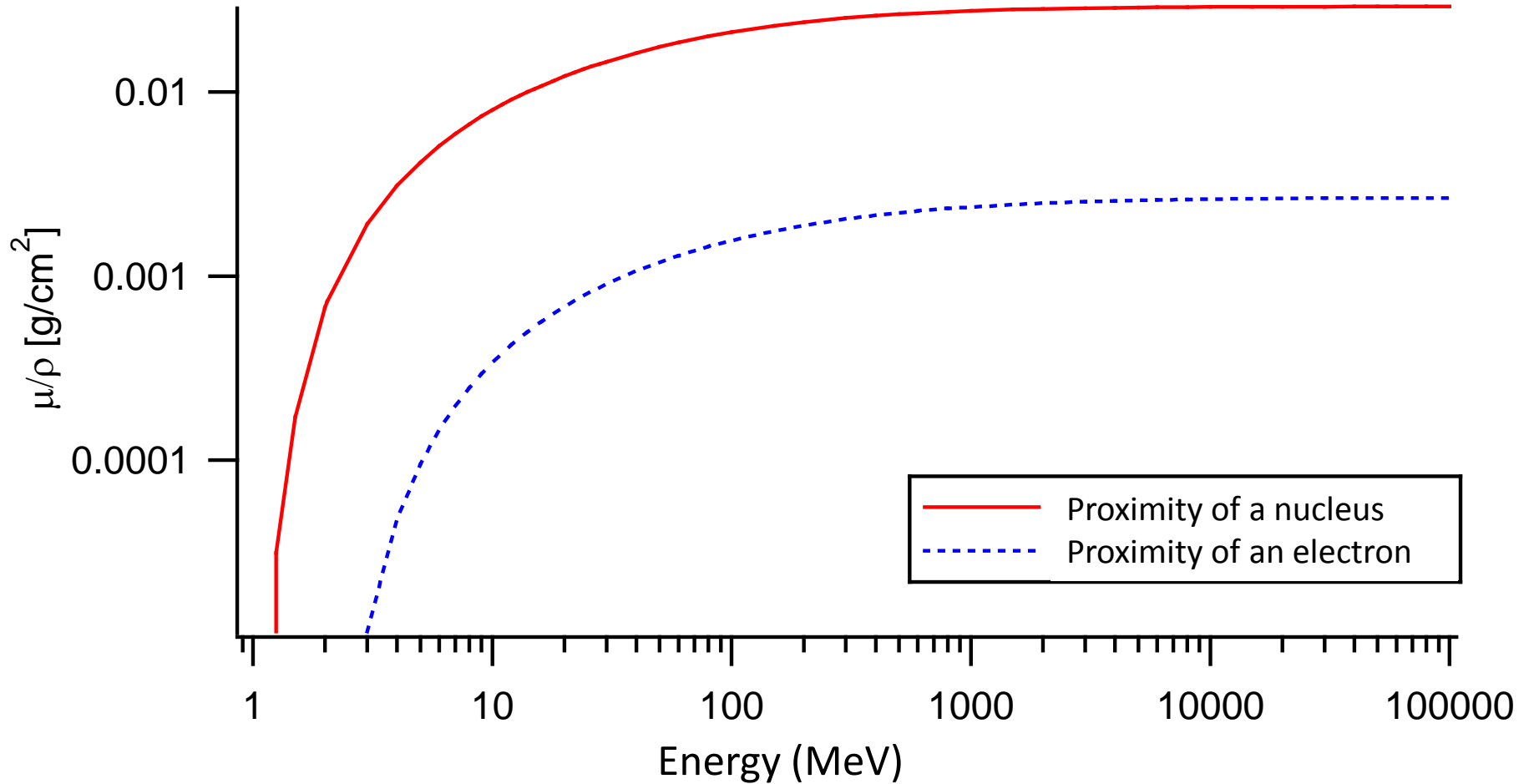
# Pair production



**FIGURE 6-14** Schematic representation of pair production. Energy of incident photon is converted into an electron and a positron (total 1.022-MeV mass-energy equivalent) plus their kinetic energy. The positron eventually undergoes mutual annihilation with a different electron, producing two 0.511-MeV annihilation photons.



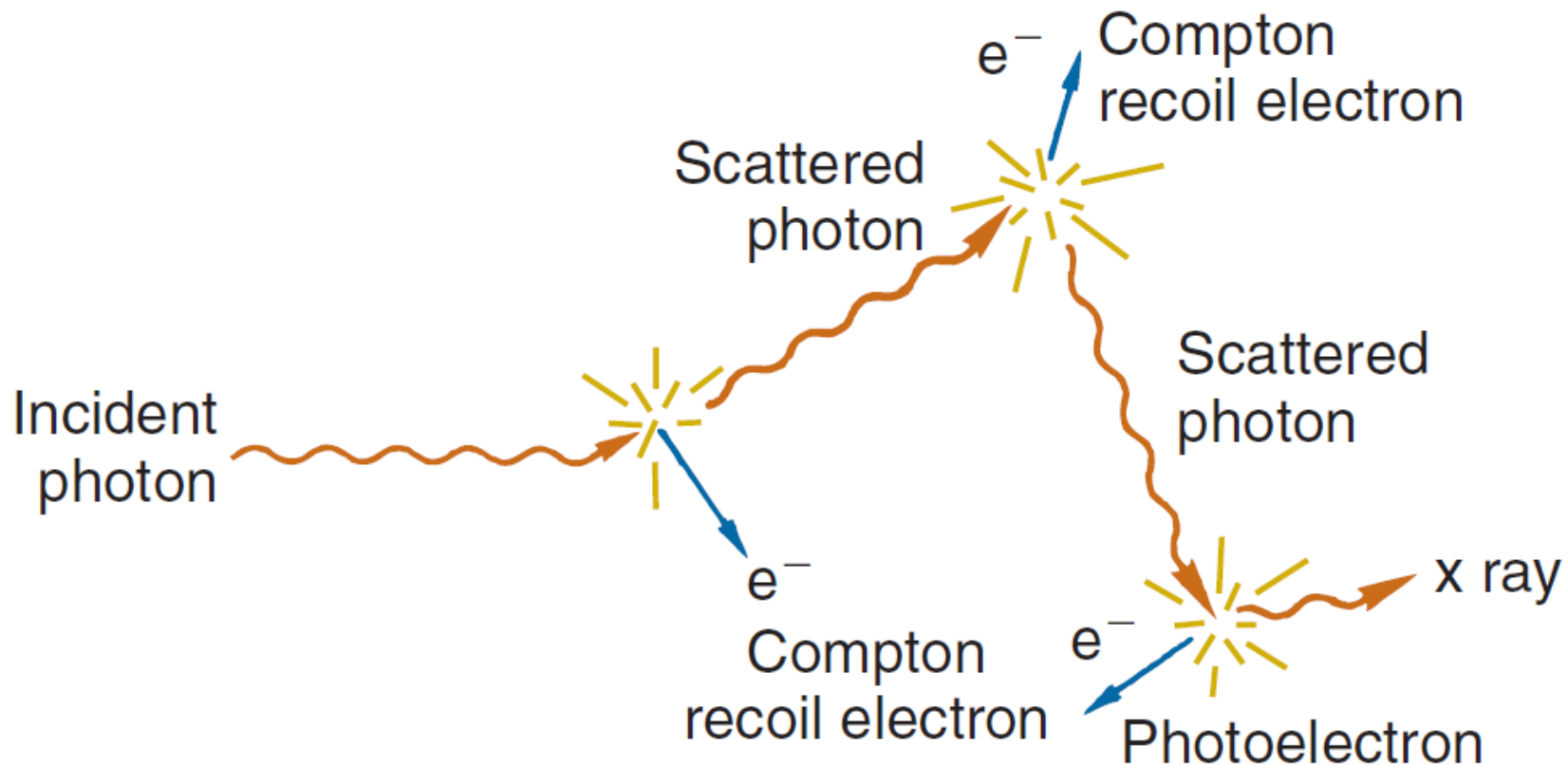
# Pair production



Probability to produce an electron/positron pair in aluminum

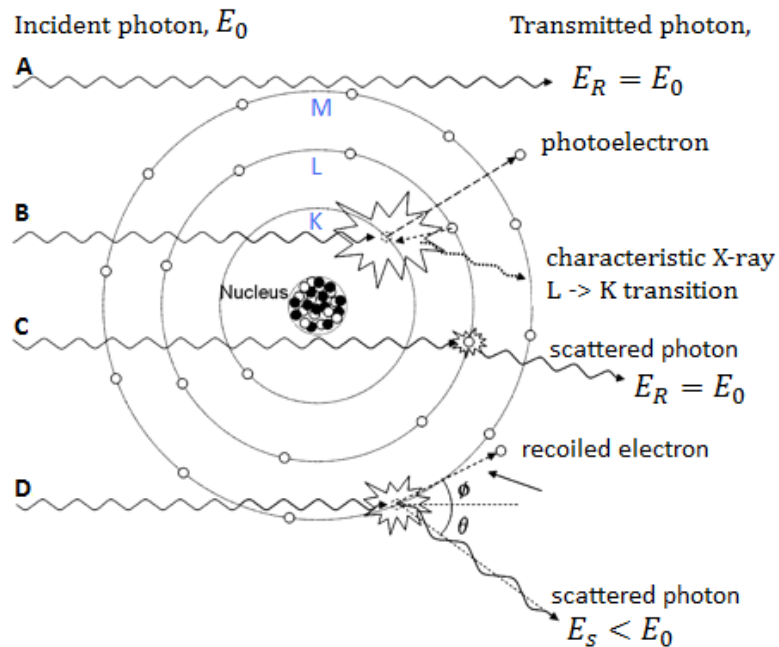
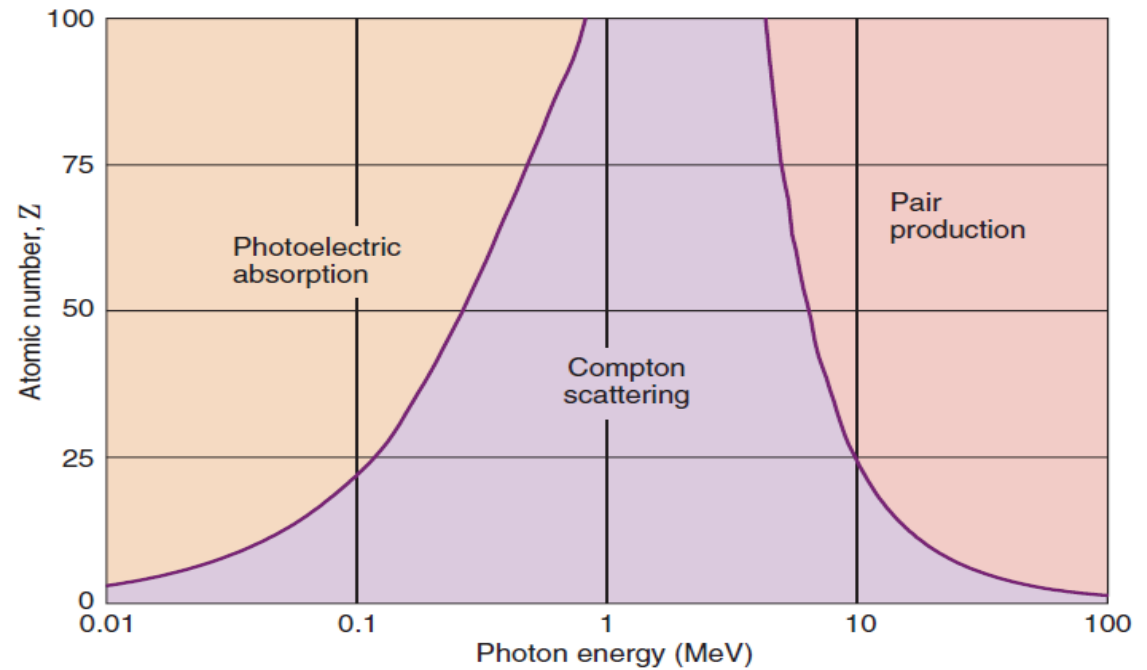
# Pair production

- Threshold:  $E_{\text{gamma}} = 1.022 \text{ MeV}$ 
  - $2 \times 0.511 \text{ MeV}$
- Important at high  $Z$  ( $\sim Z^2$ )
- Important at high energies
- Annihilation of positron



**FIGURE 6-15** Multiple interactions of a photon passing through matter. Energy is transferred to electrons in a sequence of photon-energy degrading interactions.

# Photons



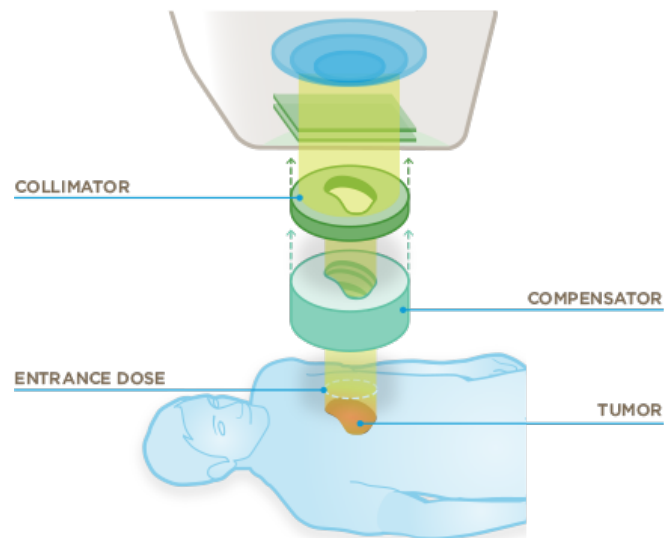
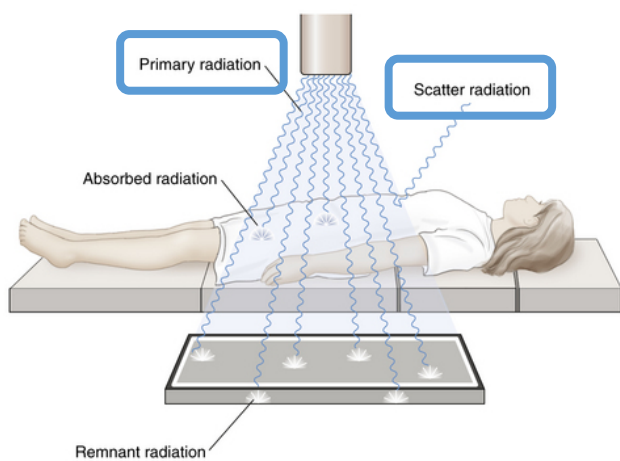
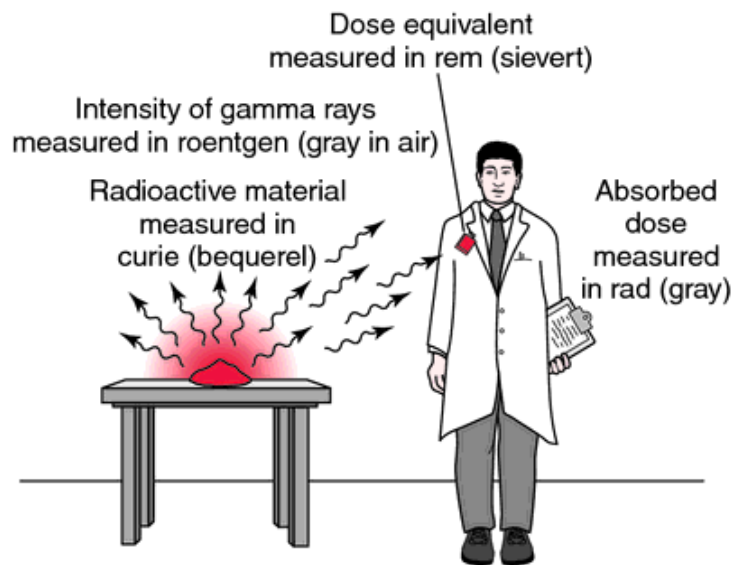
**A. TRANSMITTED UNAFFECTED**  
No interaction

**B. PHOTOELECTRIC ABSORPTION**  
Collision with a tightly bound inner-shell electron

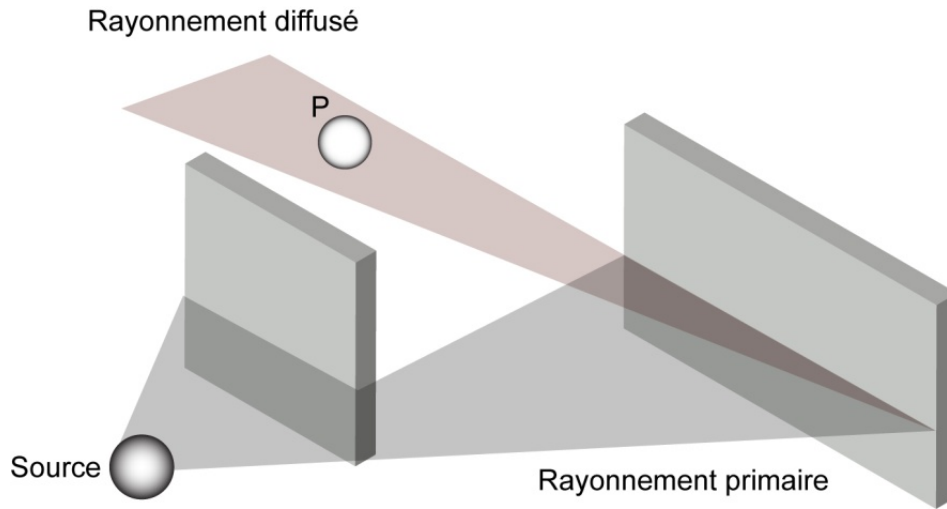
**C. RAYLEIGH SCATTERING**  
Elastic collision with a bound outer-shell electron

**D. COMPTON SCATTERING**  
Inelastic collision with weakly bound outer-shell electron

# Primary



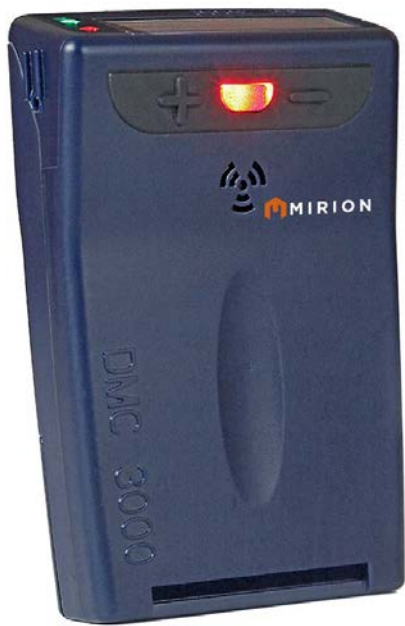
# Scattered radiation



# Objectives



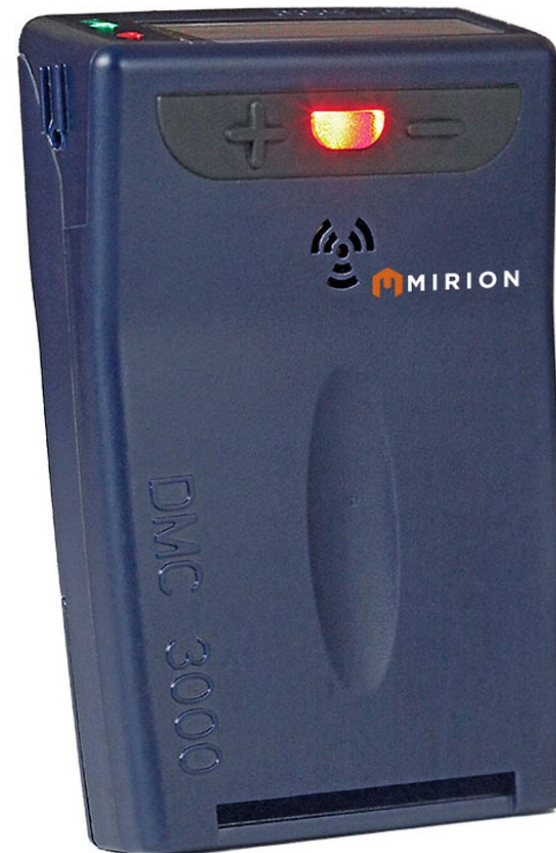
- Become familiar with radiation physics
- Understand the main concepts:
  - Radioactivity and different types of decay
  - Interaction of radiation with matter



# Introduction to Dosimetry



What's dosimetry?



Absorbed dose

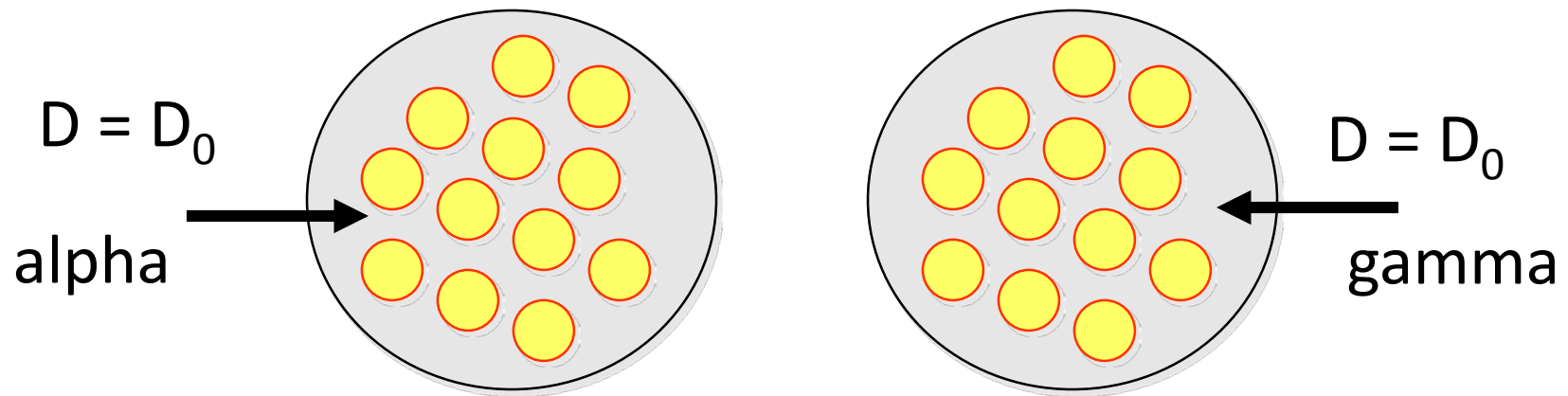
$$D = \frac{d\bar{\varepsilon}}{dm} \quad [J \cdot kg^{-1}] = [Gy]$$

**Absorbed energy  
per mass unit**

Main effect : heat  
2 Gy in water → about 0.5 mK

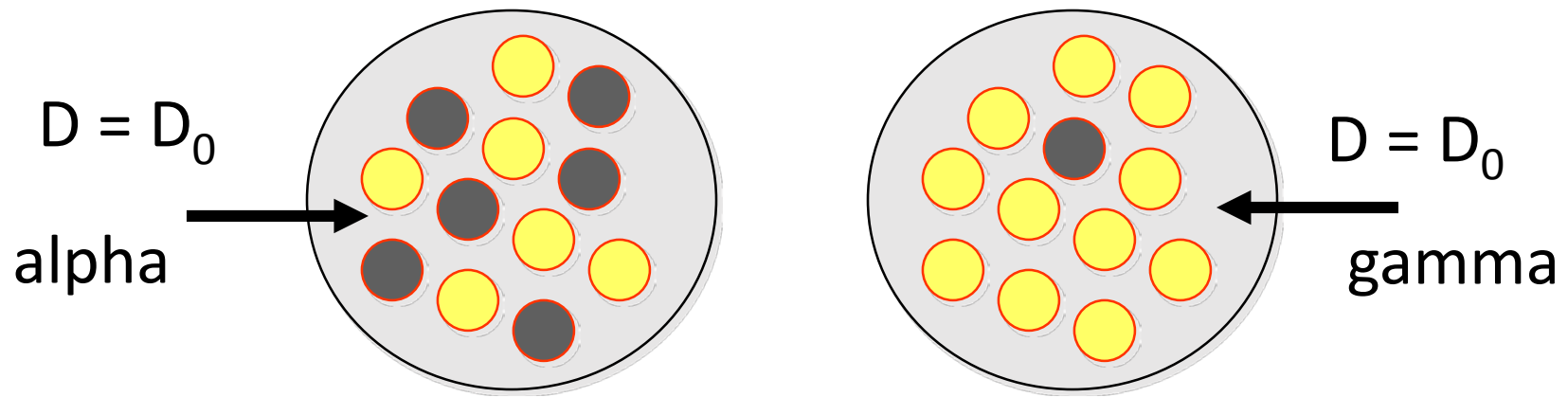
# Absorbed dose and biological effects

- The absorbed dose is not always directly related to the biological risks



# Absorbed dose and biological effects

- The absorbed dose is not always directly related to the biological risks



**Biological effects are different**

# Equivalent dose

$$H = \sum_R w_R D_R \quad [J \cdot kg^{-1}] = [Sv]$$

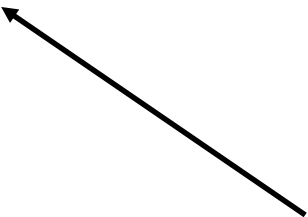
Radiation type



Radiation weighting factor



Absorbed dose delivered to target organ



**Dose weighted by a biological factor**

# Radiation weighting factor $w_R$

---

Radiation type	$W_R$
X-ray, $\gamma$ , electrons	1
protons	5
neutrons	5-20
$\alpha$ -particules	20

---

# Effective dose

- Synthetic dose indicator

$$E = \sum_T w_T H_T \quad [Sv]$$

tissue  
weighting  
factor



---

Tissue or organ	$w_T$
Bone surface, skin	0.01
Bladder, breast, liver, oesophagus, thyroide, rest	0.05
Bone marrow, colon, lung, stomach	0.12
Gonads	0.20

---

# Summary of dosimetric quantities

- **KERMA  $K$** 
  - Photon kinetic energy released per unit of mass
    - unit: gray,  $1 \text{ Gy} = 1 \text{ J/kg}$
- **Absorbed dose  $D$** 
  - Energy deposited per unit of mass
    - unit: gray,  $1 \text{ Gy} = 1 \text{ J/kg}$
- **Equivalent dose  $H$** 
  - Mean absorbed dose weighted by radiation-specific factor ( $w_R$ )
    - unit: sievert,  $1 \text{ Sv} = 1 \text{ J/kg}$
- **Effective dose  $E$** 
  - Sum of the organ equivalent doses weighted by organ-specific factors ( $w_T$ )
    - unit : sievert

Physics

Biology