

Improved hot dark matter bound on the QCD axion

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We strengthen the cosmological bound on the axion mass, by solving the momentum-dependent Boltzmann equations for axion-pion scatterings and by using a phenomenological production rate derived from pion-pion scattering data, overcoming the breakdown of chiral perturbation theory. Using present cosmological datasets we obtain $m_a < 0.24$ eV. To further improve the bound and exploit the reach of upcoming cosmological surveys, reliable non-perturbative calculations above the QCD crossover are needed.

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