

Radiation dosimetry, radiation protection and measurements

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- ─ A very brief historical introduction
- ─ Directly and indirectly ionizing radiation
	- ─ Radioactivity
	- ─ Natural exposures
- ─ The effects of ionizing radiation
	- ─ Deterministic and stochastic effects
- ─ Radiological quantities and units
	- ─ physical, protection and operational quantities
- ─ Principles of radiation protection
	- ─ Justification, optimization and dose limitation
	- ─ The ALARA principle
- ─ Protection means
- ─ Instrumentation for measuring ionizing radiation

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The discovery of radiation

1895 Discovery of X rays **Wilhelm C. Röntgen**

1897 First treatment of tissue with X rays **Leopold Freund**

J.J. Thompson

1897 "Discovery" of the electron

The discovery of radiation

Henri Becquerel (1852-1908)

1896 Discovery of natural

radioactivity

1898

Discovery of polonium and radium

Hundred years ago

Marie Curie Pierre Curie (1867 – 1934) (1859 – 1906)

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Periodic Table of Elements

Chart of nuclides

Unstable (=radioactive) nuclides **~** 3000

β⁺ and β- decays

 $11^{\circ}C \rightarrow 11B + e^+ + \nu_e + 960 \text{ keV}$

 $14C \rightarrow 14N + e$ _ + $\bar{v}_{\rm e}$ + 156 keV

http://www.fmboschetto.it/tde4/carta.htm

Directly ionizing radiation:

fast charged particles (e.g., electrons, protons, alpha particles), which deliver their energy to matter directly, through many small *Coulomb-force interactions* along the particle's track

Indirectly ionizing radiation:

- X- or y-ray photons or neutrons (i.e., **uncharged particles**), which first transfer their energy to charged particles in the matter through which they pass in a relatively few large interactions, or cause nuclear reactions
- The *resulting fast charged particles* then in turn deliver the energy in matter

The deposition of energy in matter by indirectly ionising radiation is a **twostep process**

Radioactivity: the phenomenon whereby atoms undergo spontaneous random disintegration, usually accompanied by the emission of ionising radiation*.*

The rate at which this nuclear transformations occurs in matter containing radionuclides is called **activity** and it is expressed in **Bequerels**:

 $A(t) = -dN/dt$ [Bq] $1 Bq = s^{-1}$

(the old unit is the Curie: 1 Ci = 3.7×10^{10} Bq)

where N is the number of nuclei of the radionuclide, and hence the rate of change of N with time is negative

The radioactive **half-life** $(T_{1/2})$ of a radionuclide is the time necessary for half of the nuclei present in the sample to decay

Radionuclides are either of *natural origin* or produced by *nuclear reactions* (**artificial** radionuclides)

(Emitted in the de-excitation of unstable nuclei)

 $^{137}_{\text{ES}}$ Cs

Beta⁻ -Teilchen (Elektron)

-
- [◼] Helium nuclei (2 protons + 2 neutrons)
- Energy: a few MeV
- Non-penetrating
- ◼ Radiological hazard only if inhaled, ingested or absorbed through a wound (internal irradiation)

◆ **BETA**

- Electrons or positrons
- Energy: a few keV to a few MeV
- Limited penetration
- Dangerous for skin and eyes in case of external irradiation
- [◼] Increased radiological hazard if inhaled, ingested or absorbed through a wound (internal irradiation)

Radioactivity and ionising radiation / hazard

◆ **PHOTONS**

- Electromagnetic radiation
- Energy: a few keV to a few MeV
- Very penetrating
- [◼] Radiological hazard only by external irradiation

◆ **NEUTRONS**

- Neutral particles (constituents of the atomic nucleus together with protons)
- Very penetrating
- External irradiation
- Enhanced biological effect (high LET $-$ Linear Energy Transfer radiation), which depends on their energy

HEAVY CHARGED PARTICLES (protons, ions)

- External irradiation
- Enhanced biological effect (high LET Linear Energy Transfer radiation)

β -, γ -emitter

 α - and β -particles are degraded in energy while traversing a material, until they are completely brought to rest

 γ -rays are attenuated in intensity by the material

Beta sources are usually shielded with Plexiglas, gamma sources with lead

For a given particle, target element and nuclide

- Interaction probability, σ (*cross section*)
- Flux (spectrum), Φ
- \bullet Beam intensity, I_p

$$
n = I_p \frac{\rho N_{Av}}{A} \sum_{i=p,n,\pi,pho} \int \Phi_i(E) \sigma_i(E) dE
$$

Nuclide production rate

Rule-of-thumb (probably very obvious):

The shorter the half-life, the fastest the build-up, the fastest the decay

It takes about 5 half-lives to reach saturation of activity

The absorbed dose is the energy deposited by a given radiation in a unit mass of matter

The unit of absorbed dose is the $Gray$ (mGy, μG y): $1 \text{ Gy} = 1 \text{ J/kg}$ (the old unit is the rad: 1 rad = 10^{-2} Gy)

Radiation protection uses the operational quantity "dose equivalent H" in Sievert (mSv, µSv)

> H=Q∙D $1 Sv = 1 J/kg$

 $Q =$ quality factor of the radiation

QUESTION 1

Are we all exposed (voluntarily or not) to some radiation sources?

Yes/No?

If the answer is yes, what are the natural radiation levels?

Annual exposure to natural radioactivity in **France** = 2.5 mSv (3.3 mSv including medical exposures)

During the creation of the Earth, terrestrial nuclides had been incorporated into the earth crust $(T_{1/2}$ some millions to billions of years)

...and some more:

⁵⁰V, ⁸⁷Rb, ¹¹³Cd, ¹¹⁵In, … ¹⁹⁰Pt, ¹⁹²Pt, ²⁰⁹Bi, …

Cosmogenic nuclides are produced by nuclear reactions of cosmic particles with stable nuclei of the atmosphere

More cosmogenic radionuclides:

 10 Be, 26 Al, 36 Cl, 80 Kr, ...

Ambient dose equivalent rate in µSv per hour (Sum of neutrons, muons, electrons and protons)

Courtesy PTB, Braunschweig

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Unique effects of interaction of ionizing radiation with matter

- Biological systems (humans in particular) are particularly susceptible to damage by ionizing radiation
- The expenditure of a trivial amount of energy $(-4 \text{ J/kg} = 4 \text{ Gy})$ to the whole body is likely to cause death…
- …even if this amount of energy can only raise the gross temperature by about 0.001 °C
- This is because of the ability of ionizing radiation to impart their energy to individual atoms and molecules
- The resulting high local concentration of absorbed energy can kill a cell either *directly* or through the formation of highly reactive chemical species such as *free radicals* (atom or compound in which there is an unpaired electron, such as H or CH_3) in the water medium that constitutes the bulk of the biological material

Main aim of **dosimetry** = measurement of the absorbed dose (energy/mass)

DIFFERENT TYPES OF RADIATION MAKE DIFFERENT DAMAGE

What are the biological effects of radiation?

Stochastic effects

no dose threshold (linear function of dose)

```
increase of probability by 5% per Sv 
for:
```
genetic defects cancer

result does not dependent on the amount of absorbed dose

delayed health detriments

Deterministic effects

dose received in short time interval dose threshold: > 500 mSv

immediate consequences: vomiting immun deficiency erythema and necrose

health detriments are function of the dose

lethal dose: 5 – 7 Sv

Source: Martin Volkmer, Radioaktivität und Strahlenschutz, Informationskreis Kernenergie

Lethal effects: LD50 for humans 3-5 Gy due to damage to bone marrow, in absence of bone marrow transplantation

 $RBE = 20$

4 \propto

Units of Radiation

Absorbed dose: 1 $rad \approx 1 \times 10^{-5} \text{ J/g}$

 B iological damage: $rem = # \text{ rads } xRBE$ $X-rays$, θ , $+Y-rays$, $RBE = 1$

Activity I Curie $(C_i) = 3.7 \times 10^{10}$ disintegrations/s

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1) Justification

any exposure of persons to ionizing radiation has to be justified

2) Limitation

the personal doses have to be kept below the legal limits

3) Optimization

the personal doses and collective doses have to be kept As Low As Reasonably Achievable (**ALARA**) – including social and economical factors into account

International Commission on Radiological Protection

Source: Wikipedia

Absorbed Dose D: energy absorbed per mass Unit: Gy 1 Gy = 1 J/kg $(1 \text{ Gy} = 100 \text{ rad})$

$$
D = \frac{1}{m} \int E dV
$$

Equivalent Dose H: absorbed dose of organs weighted by the radiation weighting factor w_R of radiation R:

Unit: Sv $(1 Sv = 100 rem)$

R T R R H_T , =

Effective dose E: Sum of all equivalent doses weighted with the weighting factor $w_\text{\tiny T}$ for tissue T Unit: Sv $(1 Sv = 100 rem)$

$$
E = \sum_{T} \sum_{T} w_{T} H_{T} = \sum_{T} w_{T} \sum_{R} w_{R} D_{T,R}
$$

Neutron energy / MeV

The tissue weighting factors are sex- and age-averaged values for all organs and tissues

- **Quantities on which limits are based** (effective dose, organ equivalent dose) are not measurable
- So **operational quantities** are defined
	- measurable quantities
	- quantities which are representative of the quantities on which limits are based (where possible overestimating these)
- **For external exposure:**
	- ambient dose: **H*(10)**
	- personal dose: **H^p (10)** and **H^p (0,07)**
- **For internal exposure** (after an intake):
	- committed effective dose (over 50 years): **E(50)**

History of radiation protection

M. Silari – Radiation Measurements and Dosimetry – ASP 2022 42

External radiation source \implies external exposure

Contamination

Volumetric (air)

Internal radiation source \implies internal exposure

- Person **occupationally exposed** to radiation (> 1 mSv/y)
	- Category **A** workers: > 6 mSv/y
	- Category **B** workers: < 6 mSv/y
- **Supervised area**: area with dose > 1 mSv/y (accessible to categories A and B workers)
- **Controlled area**: area with dose > 6 mSv/y (accessible to categories A workers, and with limited stay to category B workers)
- Exposure situations:
	- **risk of external exposure only** (sealed radioactive sources, radiation generators, for example X-ray tube)
	- **risk of internal and external exposure** (use of unsealed radioactive sources)

How you can protect yourself from radiation?

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Three means: distance, time, shielding

- **Distance**: the dose rate decreases with the inverse squared of the distance (from a point-like source)
- ◆ **Time**: the dose is proportional to the time spent close to the source $D = dD/dt x t$
- ◆ **Shielding**: the dose rate approximately reduces as $exp(-d/\lambda)$
	- **λ** = shielding properties of the material

TIME? **ATTENUATION?** DISTANCE?

> For β radiation: plexiglass For γ radiation: iron or lead For n: concrete

- **Time:** limit the duration of the stay in the radiation field
	- Job preparation
	- Dry run
	- Monitoring of the duration of exposure
- **Distance:** stay as far as possible from the source
	- Dispersion law: $1/r^2$ for a point source, more like $1/r$ for an extended source
	- Very important at short distances
	- Factor of 100 between 1 cm and 10 cm (use of tongs/tweezers)
- **Shielding:** use of protective shields
	- Material and thickness of the shield depend of the type and energy of the radiation and of the reduction factor required

- **Wearing a personal dosimeter** on the chest or at the waist
	- monthly measurement (at least)
	- Information may be delayed (depends on dosimeter)
	- $-$ measurement threshold \sim 0.1 mSv/month
- **Wearing an electronic dosimeter**
	- instantaneous information
	- possibility to setting a dose or dose rate alarm
- **Wearing an extremity dosimeter**
	- In the case of specific hand exposure risk (handling of radioactive substances)

- **The dosimeter is calibrated to measure:**
	- **H^p (10):** personal equivalent dose at a depth of 10 mm in the chest
	- **H^p (0.07):** personal equivalent dose at a depth of 0.07 mm in the chest
- **At low measured doses** (less than the limits) it is assumed that:
	- the effective dose and the equivalent dose to each organ is equal to H_p(10);
	- $-$ the equivalent dose to the skin is equal to $H_p(0.07)$;
- **At high measured doses** (exceeding the limits),
	- an investigation is undertaken (**dosimetric reconstruction**) in order to determine the effective dose and the equivalent doses to the organs which were actually received.

Personal dosimetry for monitoring external exposure

Kodak film badge

Personal dosimeter: "Legal dose"

Finger dosimeter

Operational dosimeter DMC: "Operational dose"

Radioactive contamination at particle accelerators can arise from:

- the use of unsealed radioactive sources
- activation of air and dust around the accelerators
- activation of oils or cooling fluids
- the machining or treatment of radioactive components
- normal or accidental emissions from targets whilst they are irradiated or after irradiation

Two factors should be considered in defining precautions for the control of unsealed radioactivity:

- the prevention of the contamination of
	- personnel
	- equipment
- Material that has been brought into and removed from an accelerator tunnel or bunker during shutdown (maintenance) will no be activated BUT …
- ... it might be contaminated
- If there is a suspicion of contamination, it has to be checked before leaving the area

- **Internal** (+ **external**) exposure: the incorporated radionuclides irradiate the organs and tissues to which they attach
- Exposure lasts until the complete elimination of the radionuclides by radioactive decay and biological metabolism

Internal exposure can occur by:

- **- ingestion**
- **- inhalation**
- **- skin**

- Determination of the activity taken into the body and calculation of the **committed effective dose** with a standard model
- **Measurements to determine the activity taken into the body:**
	- direct measurement of the radiation emitted by the person using a thyroid monitor, a lung monitor or a whole body monitor (WBC, whole body counter)
	- measurement of the activity in the excreta (urine, faeces)
- **Two stages strategy:**
	- screening measurement (with a simple laboratory instrument)
	- If a threshold is exceeded, actual measurement of the intake

- **Operational quantity**: committed effective dose E₅₀
- For radionuclides with **short half-live**, the dose is received in the days following the intake;
- For radionuclides with a **long half-live** (strontium-90, actinides), the dose is received over many years following the intake;
- **The committed dose** is attributed to the period of intake;
- Dose is calculated using standard metabolic models;
- If dose limits are exceeded an **investigation is undertaken** (dosimetric reconstruction) to determine the committed dose; an adaptation of the model may be necessary.

Personal protection equipment against contamination

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Since the Radiation Protection quantities are not directly measurable, their estimate involves the measurement of a physical quantity.

Courtesy S. Agosteo, Politecnico di Milano

Scintillating crystal coupled to a PMT

From Glenn F. Knoll, Radiation Detection and Measurement

AUTOMESS dose rate meter 6150 AD6

Detector: Geiger Müller counter *Range:* 0.5 µSv/h – 10 mSv/h *Energy range:* 60 keV – 1.3 MeV *Dimensions:* 130 mm x 80 mm x 29 mm *Alimentation*: 9 V standard battery

ADK surface contamination meter for α , β and γ radiation *Detector:* sealed proportional counter Active surface 100 cm2

Contamination monitors

Whole body counting

Some elements have a very large cross section for slow neutrons and can be exploited for neutron detection

1) Boron $^{10}B + n \rightarrow {}^{7}Li + \alpha$ Q = 2.793 MeV $^{10}B + n \rightarrow {}^{7}Li^{*} + \alpha$ Q = 2.310 MeV 2) Lithium 6 Li+ n \rightarrow $3H + \alpha$ Q = 4.78 MeV 3) ³He $3He + n \rightarrow 3H + p$ Q = 764 keV

Neutron cross sections

Mean free path of thermal neutrons

- in 3 He gas \approx 7 cm
- in solid $^{10}B \approx 70 \mu m$

Courtesy S. Agosteo, Politecnico di Milano

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 $BF₃$ gas and ³He gas make detectors for slow neutrons with excellent gamma discrimination

Gamma rays can interact in the walls and produce electrons in the gas, but the energy loss of electrons is small (\approx 2 keV/cm), so that these pulses are much smaller than those due to neutrons

Pulse height spectrum from a BF³ proportional counter

The shape of the pulse height spectrum is due to the energy loss of the recoils in the gas

Rem counters

Boron plastic Polyethylene BF³ tube Boron plastic Studsvik 2202D **³He counter** PF **Tungsten layer** cm 11.4 cm Eberline WENDI-2

Berthold LB6411 (also LB6411Pb)

MAB SNM500(X)

• **Active monitoring**

- Ambient dose rate
- Water contamination
- Airborne contamination
- Weather parameters
- Gate monitors

• **Passive monitoring**

– Thermoluminescent dosimeters placed in the environment

Environmental monitoring

REM counter Gas filled, high pressure ionization chamber

Beam-on: to protect workers in areas adjacent to accelerator tunnels and experiments against prompt radiation (mainly neutrons, E < some GeV)

Alarm function

Air filled ionization chamber

Beam-off: to protect workers during maintenance and repair against radiation fields caused by decay of radionuclides (mainly gammas, E < 2.7 MeV)

No alarm function

Site Gate Monitor

Reading of radiation levels directly available

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 \bullet

Radiation Alarm Unit (RAMSES)

Thermoluminescence dosimeters (TLD) inside a polyethylene moderators are used to monitor neutron and gamma doses in the experimental areas and in the environment.

TLDs are passive devices used CERN-wide to integrate radiation doses over a period of several months.

Glenn F. Knoll, Radiation Detection and Measurement, 4th edition

Frank H. Attix, Introduction to Radiological Physics and Radiation **Dosimetry**

Annals of the ICRP (International Commission on Radiological Protection) <http://www.icrp.org/publications.asp>

ICRU publications, International Commission on Radiation Units and Measurements <http://www.icru.org/>

Supplementary material

Periodic Table of Elements

Arithmetic Mean Radon Level by Country

(Based on Data up to 2007)

Classification of radiological areas at CERN

Radiation Area

From the 15th of March 2021, the Radiation Protection Group is implementing a new signage scheme for radiation areas to better visualise the level of the radiological risk

- Use of work processes and special tooling to reduce time in work area
- Staging and preparation of necessary materials and special tools
- Maximization of prefabrication in workshop
- Use of mock-ups for complex tasks
- "Dry-run" of the activities using applicable procedures
- Engineering, design and use of temporary shielding
- Use of remote handling procedures

Protection methods against intakes of radioactivity

- **Isolating the radioactive substance**
	- use of containment
	- use of glove boxes
	- use of fume cupboards
	- **Isolating the person**
		- do not eat, drink, or smoke in a supervised or controlled area
		- wear protection gloves and laboratory coats
		- use respiratory protective equipment

- Continuous measurement of $\beta\gamma$ -dose (DIS-system) and integration of the neutron dose (track dosimeter)
- Obligation to wear the dosimeter in supervised and controlled areas
- Wearing of the dosimeter on the chest
- Reading at least once a month at a reader (about 50 readers available on the site)
- Possibility of checking the dose associated with a given operation (read the dosimeter before and after)
- Dosimeter to be returned to the dosimetry service at the end of stay or at the end of a 12 month period

- Obligation to wear an operational dosimeter in a controlled area
- Continuous β y-dose measurement
- Instrument: DMC
- Display of $Hp(10)$ (resolution of 1 μSv)
- Dose alarm at 2 mSv
- Dose rate alarm at 2 mSv/h
- Audible detection signal (« bip »)
- Record the dose before and after the operation

For higher levels of contamination = higher risk

- Tyvek overall
- Tape-sealed gloves
- Overshoes
- **Respiratory Protective** Equipment

Personal protection equipment against contamination

Whole body protection from contamination

Ventilated, filter and over-pressurized Tyvek

Personal protection equipment against contamination

Individual protection equipment is mandatory for work in areas with contamination risk (cleaning operations, machining of radioactive material or equipment, …)