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Neutron source based on ${}^7\text{Li}(p,n){}^7\text{Be}$ reaction for Boron Neutron Capture Therapy

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If Boron Neutron Capture Therapy is to become a practical option, accelerator-based sources of high fluxes of epithermal neutrons are essential. Generation of low energy neutron can be achieved by ${}^7\text{Li}(p,n){}^7\text{Be}$ reaction using accelerator-based neutron source. Much work has been performed on development of high-flux compact proton accelerators, but a doselimiting component remains design of the neutron production target. Specifically, lithium has a low melting point (180°C) and low thermal conductivity (44 W/m°C). In this study, therapeutic gain and tumor dose per target power, as parameters to evaluate the treatment quality, were calculated. Energies near the reaction threshold for deep-seated brain tumors were employed. These calculations were performed with the Monte Carlo N-Particle (MCNP) code. As a result, a good therapeutic gain was obtained with a simple but effective beam shaping assembly. Also, heat transfer evaluations of a lithium target designed were performed by ANSYS software. The target designed show that the peak lithium temperature can be held below 150°C with indalloy flowing by a cooper microchannels plate.

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