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Measurements of open charm hadrons in Au+Au collisions at $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200$ GeV by the STAR experiment

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At RHIC energies, charm quarks are primarily produced in hard partonic scatterings at early stages of ultra-relativistic heavy-ion collisions. This makes them an ideal probe of the Quark-Gluon Plasma (QGP) produced in these collisions, since they experience the whole evolution of the hot and dense medium. STAR is able to study the interactions of charm quarks with the QGP through direct reconstruction of hadronic decays of $D^\pm$, D^0 , D_s , and $\Lambda_c^\pm$ hadrons. This is possible thanks to an excellent pointing resolution provided by the Heavy Flavor Tracker. In this talk, we will present the most recent results on open charm hadron production from the STAR experiment. In particular, we will discuss the nuclear modification factors of $D^\pm$ and D^0 mesons which give access to the charm quark energy loss in the QGP. We will also discuss D_s / D^0 and $\Lambda_c^\pm / D^0$ yield ratios as functions of transverse momentum and collision centrality which help us understand better the charm quark hadronization process in heavy-ion collisions. In addition, we will present the rapidity-odd directed flow of D^0 mesons, which can be used to probe the initial tilt of the QGP bulk and effects of early-time magnetic field.

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