Neutron-antineutron in nuclei

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- Controversy
  - Hot seminars on the subject
  - Nazaruk and others

New limit on the neutron–antineutron transitions

V.I. Nazaruk [1]
Institute for Nuclear Research of the Academy of Sciences of Russia, 60th October Anniversary Prospect 7a, 117312 Moscow, Russia

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Editor: P.V. Landshoff

Abstract

We reexamine the problem of extracting a lower limit on the free-space $n\bar{n}$ oscillation time τ_{min} from the nuclear annihilation lifetime. It is shown that the $n\bar{n}$ transitions in the medium are suppressed only by a factor 0.5. As a result we get $\tau_{min} = 3 \times 10^{31}$ yr, which increases the previous limit by 31 orders of magnitude.

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Limits on n - $\bar{n}$ Oscillations

A recent paper[1] reported an upper limit of 0.7 $\times 10^{-30}$ yr^{-1} for the rate of $n \to \bar{n}$ transitions[2] in oxygen nuclei and deduced a corresponding lower limit of 2×10^7 s for the free-neutron oscillation time, by use of a relation taken from Dover, Gal, and Richard.[3] This is the latest in a series of papers (Refs. 11–17 of Ref. 1) which reflect the prevalent view that there is a direct relation between the $n \to \bar{n}$ transition rates for free neutrons and for those inside a nucleus. This had led to the unjustified interpretation that improved tests

  - Our results supported by Alberico et al., Kopeliovich et al.,

NEUTRON–ANTINEUTRON OSCILLATIONS IN NUCLEI

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Dipartimento di Fisica Teorica, Università di Torino, Torino, Italy

Received 11 June 1990

S-D mixing in the deuteron

Rarita-Schwinger equations

$$\psi = \frac{u(r)}{r}\,|^3S_1\rangle + \frac{w(r)}{r}\,|^3D_1\rangle$$

$$-u''(r) + m\,V_{00}\,u(r) + m\,V_{02}\,w(r) = m\,E\,u(r)\,,$$

$$-w''(r) + \frac{6}{r^2}\,w(r) + m\,V_{22}\,w(r) + m\,V_{02}\,u(r) = m\,E\,w(r)\,,$$

$$V_{00} = V_c\,,\quad V_{22} = V_c - 2\,V_T - 3\,V_{LS} - 3\,V_{LL}\,,\quad V_{02} = \sqrt{8}\,V_T\,.$$

Only about 5%, but crucial for the deuteron and many other nuclear states. See Ericson & Rosa-Clot and Blatt & Weisskopf

S-D mixing in charmonium

- At first, $J/\psi = 1S$, $\psi' = 2S$, $\psi'' = 1D$, etc.
- Leptonic coupling of ψ'' requires some S-wave admixture
- Usually

$$|S(^3D_1)\rangle \simeq \frac{\langle 2^3S_1|\sqrt{8}\,V_T|1^3D_1\rangle}{E_0(2S) - E_0(1D)}\,|2^3S_1\rangle\ .$$

- Solving RS eqs. in specific models indicate some important $1S$ admixture: states with same node structure mix better
- Also

$$\psi^{(n)} \leftrightarrow D^{(*)}\bar{D}^{(*)} \leftrightarrow \psi^{(m)}$$

e.g., Cornell model

S-D mixing in muonium or hydrogen

- Quadrupole deformation of an atom such as (μ^+, e^-)
- Small effect in principle measurable in a gradient of electric field
- More delicate than in a $(Q\bar{Q})$ potential model, as the sum on intermediate states (if performed!), extends over the continuum

$$|D(\text{g.s.})\rangle = \sum_n \frac{\langle n^3D_1|\sqrt{8}\,V_T|1^3S_1\rangle}{E_0(1S) - E_0(nD)}\,|n^3D_1\rangle\ .$$

- Sternheimer (Dalgarno & Lewis) equation

$$-w''(r) + \frac{6}{r^2}\,w(r) + m\,V_{22}\,w(r) + m\,V_{02}\,u_0(r) = m\,E_0\,w(r)\ ,$$

- Good surprise: can be solved analytically, leading to a compact expression for the quadrupole moment of the ground state.

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Deuteron lifetime

- Simplest nucleus. We restrict to S-wave, but including D-wave is straightforward
- Hulten wave function

$$u(r) = N\,[\exp(-a\,r) - \exp(-b\,r)]\ ,$$

with $a = 0.04570$ and $b = 0.2732\,\mathrm{GeV}^{-1}$, and the proper behavior at $r \to 0$ and $r \to \infty$.

- antineutron component given by the Sternheimer equation

$$-w''(r) + m\,W\,w(r) - m\,E_0\,w(r) = -m\,\gamma\,u(r)\ ,$$

with $E_0 = -0.0022\,GeV$ deuteron energy, $\gamma = 1/\tau(n\bar{n})$ strength of transition, and W complex potential of the $N\bar{N}$ interaction.

- width given by

$$-\frac{\Gamma}{2} = \int_0^\infty \mathrm{Im}\,W\,|w(r)|^2\,\mathrm{d}r = -\gamma\int_0^\infty u(r)\ \mathrm{Im}\,w(r)\,\mathrm{d}r\ ,$$

Deuteron lifetime-2

- One gets (valid for other nuclei)

$$\Gamma \propto \gamma^2 , \qquad T = T_r\, \tau(n\bar{n})^2 ,$$

- where T_r is the reduced lifetime (in s^{-1}!).
- $N\bar{N}$ potential by Dover-Richard-Sainio (Khono-Weise, for instance, give similar results)

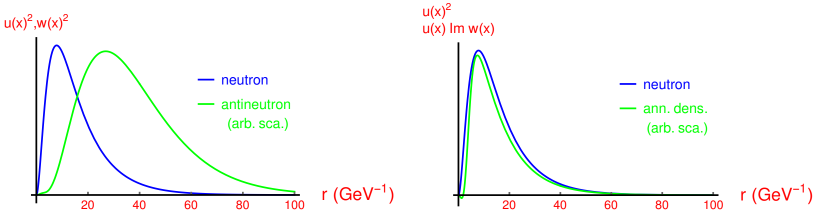
$$W(r) = -\frac{V_0 + i\,W_0}{1 + \exp[(r - R)/a)} ,$$
$$V_0 = W_0 = 0.5\,\mathrm{GeV} , \quad a = 0.2\,\mathrm{fm} , \quad R = 0.8\,\mathrm{fm} ,$$

- $$T_r \simeq 3\,10^{22}\,s^{-1} .$$

Thus $T \gtrsim 10^{33}$ yr for the deuteron $\Rightarrow \tau(n\bar{n}) \sim 10^9$ s.

Lifetime of the deuteron-3

- Spatial extension of n, $\bar{n}$ and annihilation density $\propto \gamma\, u(r)\ \mathrm{Im}\, w(r)$.



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Lifetime of the deuteron-4

- Alternative formula

$$T_R \approx \frac{\langle V_n - \mathrm{Re}\, V_{\bar{n}}\rangle^2 + \langle \mathrm{Im}\, V_{\bar{n}}\rangle^2}{-2\,\langle \mathrm{Im}\, V_{\bar{n}}\rangle}\ ,$$

- is not too bad, but not too good either
- does not distinguish inner from outer neutrons
- works in the limit of deep binding!
- underestimates the rate of decay, especially in case of weakly-bound external neutrons

Lifetime of ^{16}O

- As an example of medium-size nucleus proton-decay exp.
- See Dover, Gal, R., and Friedman & Gal, ...
- Shell-model with individual wave function for $S_{1/2}$, $P_{1/2}$, ... to reproduce the observed properties (mainly r.m.s.)
- Summarized as an effective neutron potential for each shell, $V_n = V(n - {}^{15}\mathrm{O})$
- While $V_{\bar{n}}$ taken from $\bar{p}$-nucleus phenomenology (exotic atoms, low-energy scattering)
- Same inhomogeneous eqn. as for deuteron, for each shell

Results for ^{16}O and ^{56}Fe

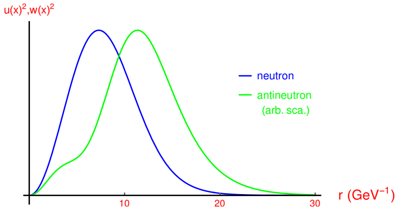
TABLE I. Reduced lifetime T_R (in units of 10^{23} sec^{-1}) for the neutrons in ^{16}O.

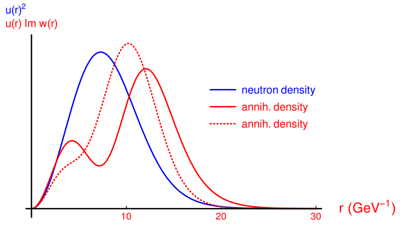
Orbit lj	$s_{1/2}$	$p_{3/2}$	$p_{1/2}$	Average
Model I (Ref. 18)	1.63	1.11	0.94	1.2
Model II (Ref. 19)	1.21	0.85	0.75	0.8

TABLE II. Reduced lifetime T_R (units 10^{23} sec^{-1}) for the neutrons in ^{56}Fe

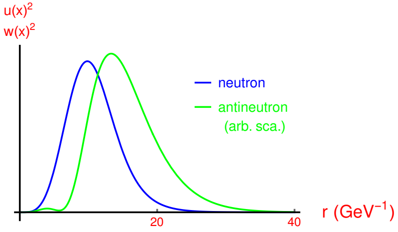
Orbital lj	T_R (Model II)	T_R (Model I)
$s_{1/2}$	1.68	3.32
$p_{3/2}$	1.50	2.75
$p_{1/2}$	1.54	2.92
$d_{5/2}$	1.26	2.04
$2s_{1/2}$	1.09	1.60
$d_{3/2}$	1.33	2.29
$f_{7/2}$	0.98	1.34
$2p_{3/2}$	0.57	0.64
Average	1.13	1.69

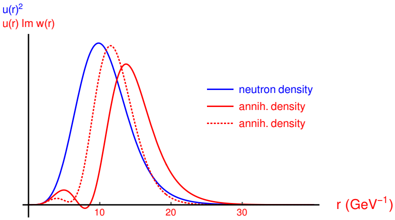
Results for ^{16}O and ^{56}Fe





Results for ^{16}O and ^{56}Fe





Conclusions

- Oscillations mainly outside
- Subsequent annihilation mainly at the surface
- So minimal risk of dramatic medium renormalization of the basic process
- Good knowledge of the antinucleon-nucleus interaction in this region
- Nuclei with neutron skin or neutron halo favored
- $T_R \sim 10^{23}\ s$ in $T(\text{nucleus}) = T_r\, \tau_{n\bar{n}}^2$