



The GATE Monte Carlo simulation platform: The researcher's ally in medical physics

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Associate professor @ Laboratoire de Physique de Clermont, University Clermont Auvergne
Spokesperson the OpenGATE collaboration

- **Development/optimization of medical physics systems**
 - Long term development
 - Need valuable predictive tools



Simon's Cat on YouTube

- **Modeling/simulation of systems**
 - Helpful for the experimental set-up
 - Costless (*except with a cat* or if you need large computing resources)
 - Step forward to the future



The MC codes in medical physics



University of Washington

Division of Nuclear Medicine

SimSET



MCEP

Penelope



The SIMIND Monte Carlo **LUND**
program UNIVERSITY



EGSnrc

Toolkit for Monte Carlo simulation of ionizing radiation transport

SWORD



The collaboration

25 laboratories, companies, clinics developing and validating an **open source platform**



Spokesperson
Lydia Maigne

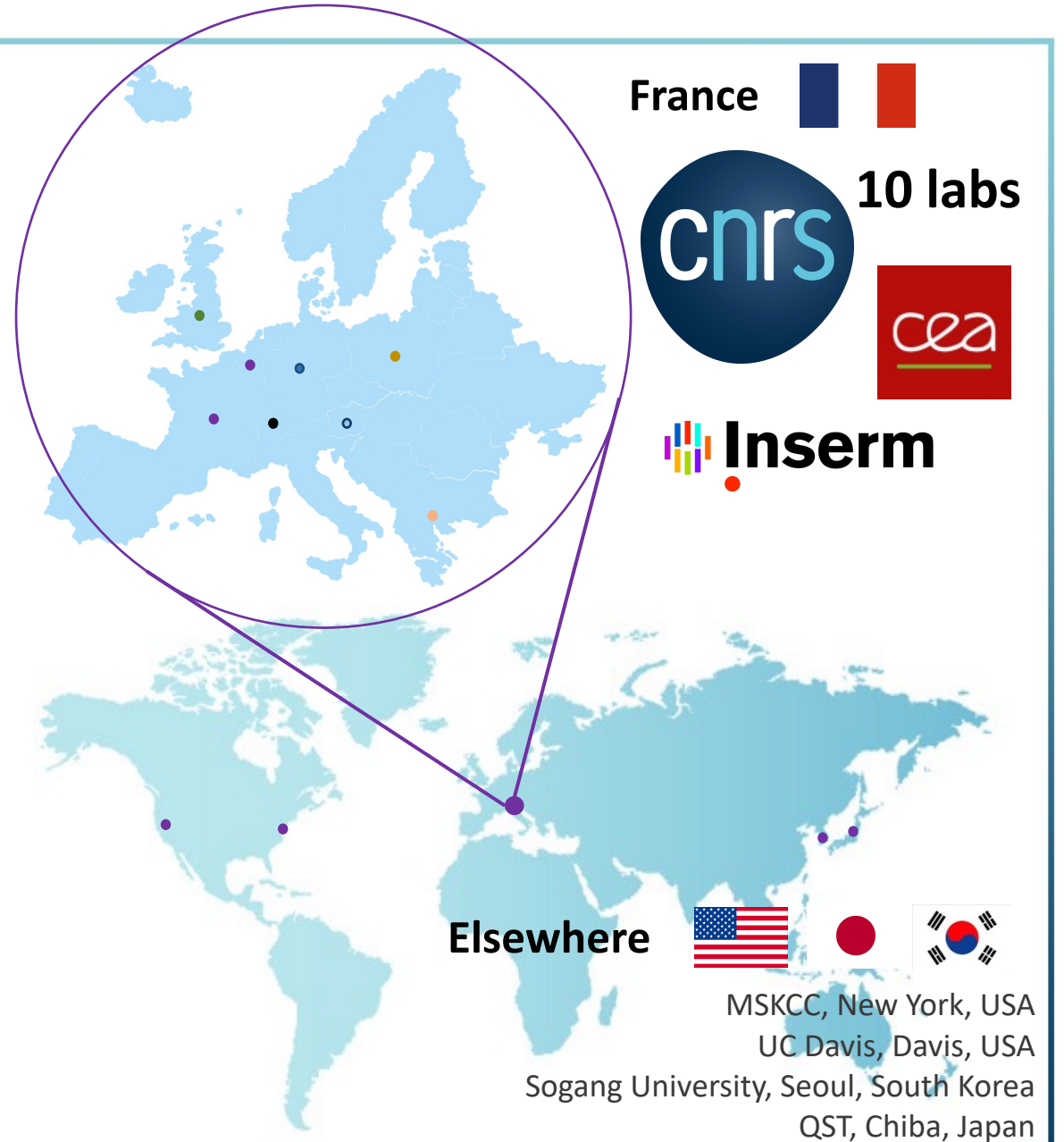


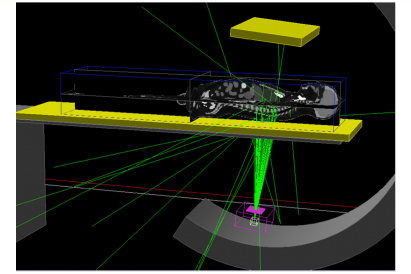
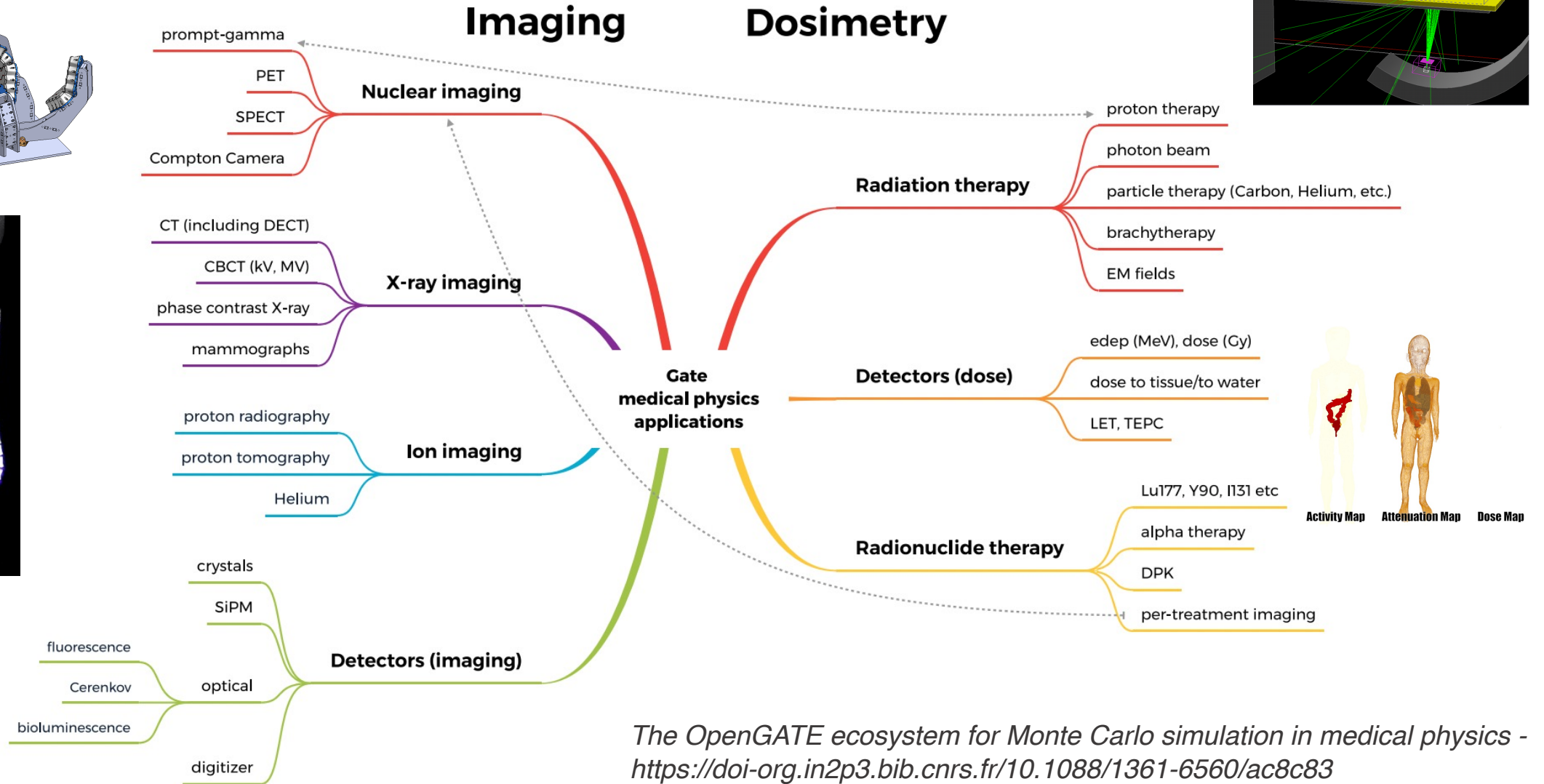
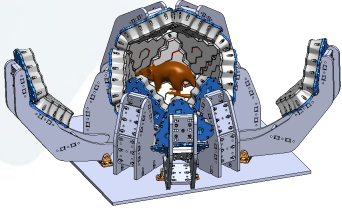
Tech. Coord.
David Sarrut

Europe



- FH Aachen, University of Applied Sciences, Julich, Germany
- Medisip, Ghent University, Belgium
- Medical University of Vienna, Wiener Neustadt, Austria
- MedAustron, Wiener Neustadt, Austria
- Christie Medical Physics & Engineering, Manchester, UK
- JPET collaboration, Poland
- Institute of Nuclear Physics Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland
- Univ. of Patras, Dept of Med. Phys., Greece
- BioemTech, Athens, Greece
- Paul Scherrer Institute (PSI), Switzerland

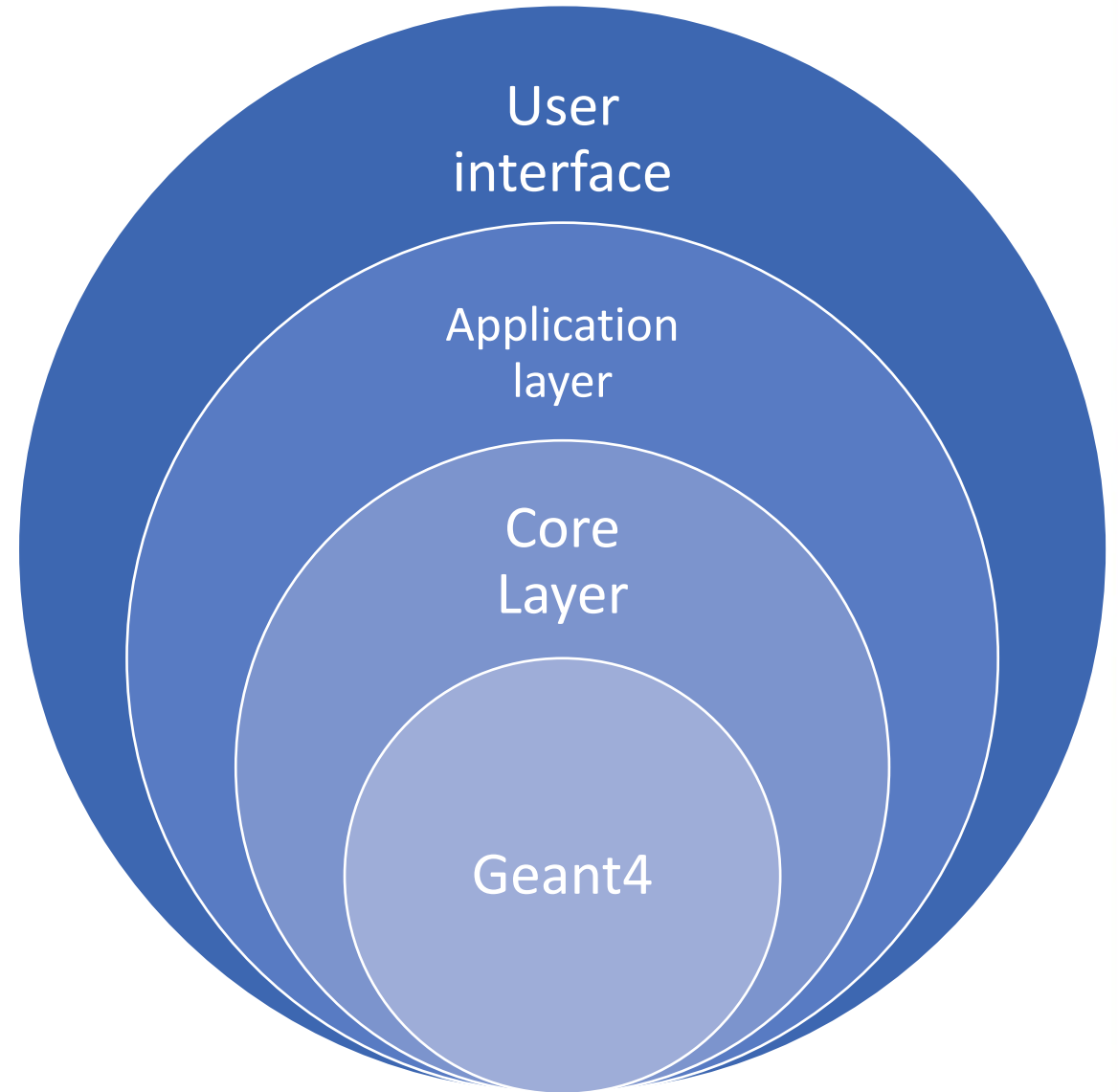




The OpenGATE ecosystem for Monte Carlo simulation in medical physics - <https://doi-org.in2p3.bib.cnrs.fr/10.1088/1361-6560/ac8c83>

GATE 9.2 (April 2022)

- 17 years of developments & 70 contributors
- C++ code: 200 classes, 14000 lines
- Based on the Geant4 kernel (current G4 11)
- Derived C++ classes
 - ✓ Modeling of detectors, sources, patient
 - ✓ Movement (detectors and patient)
 - ✓ Radioactive decays (mouvement, cinetics...)
- Easy to use
- Text scripts to define simulation parameters



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```
#####  
# VISUALISATION  
#####  
/vis/open OGLSQt  
.....  
#####  
# VERBOSE  
#####  
/gate/verbose Physic 2  
.....  
#####  
# GEOMETRY  
#####  
.....  
#####  
# PHYSICS  
#####  
.....  
#####  
# ACTORS  
#####  
.....  
#####  
# INITIALISATION  
#####  
/gate/run/initialize  
#####  
#####  
# SOURCE  
#####  
.....  
#####  
# RANDOM ENGINE  
#####  
.....  
#####  
# MEASUREMENT SETTINGS  
#####  
.....
```



Open-source Code – Examples - Tools

Source code - <https://github.com/OpenGATE/Gate>

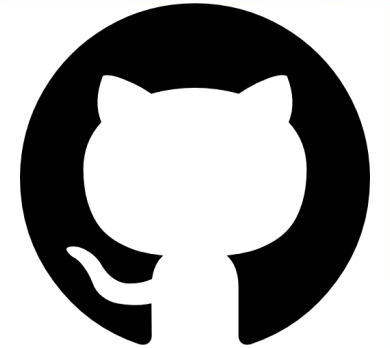
Examples - <https://github.com/OpenGATE/GateContrib>

Python tools - <https://github.com/OpenGATE/gatetools>

Docker + VM - <https://opengatecollaboration.org>

GATE10 - <https://github.com/OpenGATE/opengate>

Official release Mid 2023



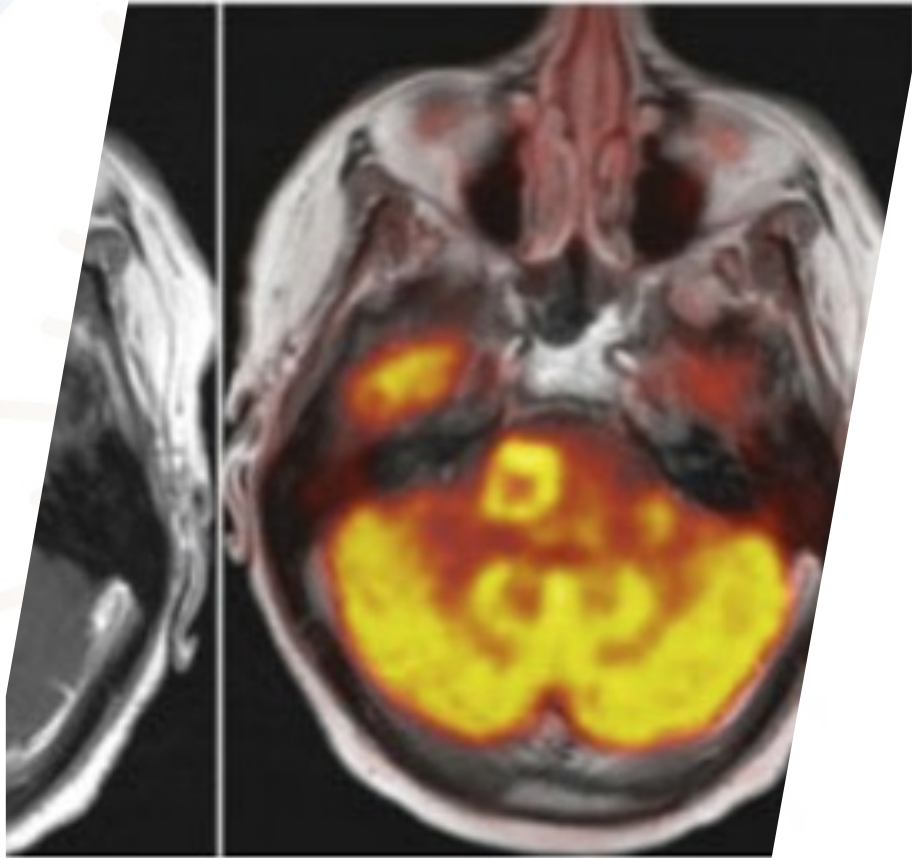
GATE 9.2 release (April 2022)

Compatible with G4 11

More than 70 contributors (since 2012)

25+ benchmarks

GATE USERS MAILING LIST - Information, job offers, bug reports, help <http://opengatecollaboration.org/maillinglist>



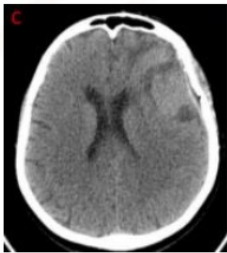
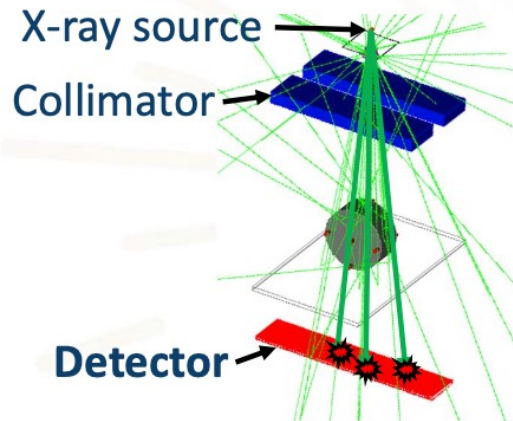
Medical imaging

Medical imaging systems

The image quality (resolution, contrast) and radiation exposure (patient dose) are mainly determined by the detector performance

X-ray CT

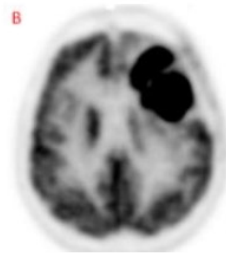
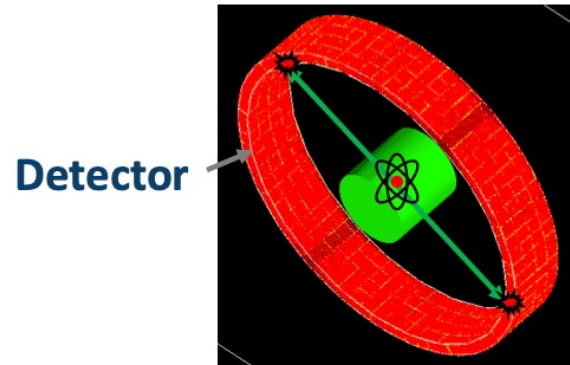
Computed tomography



Transmission imaging

PET

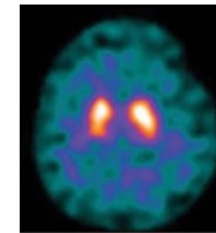
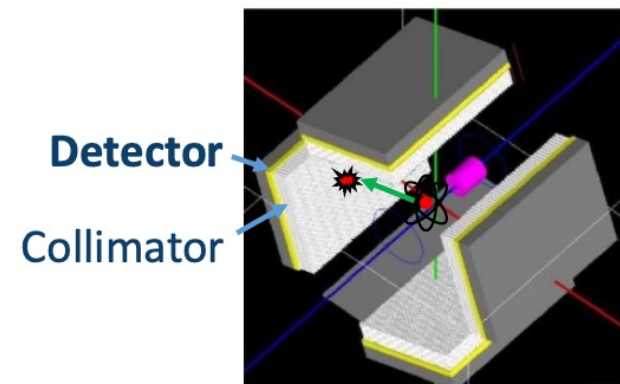
Positron emission tomography



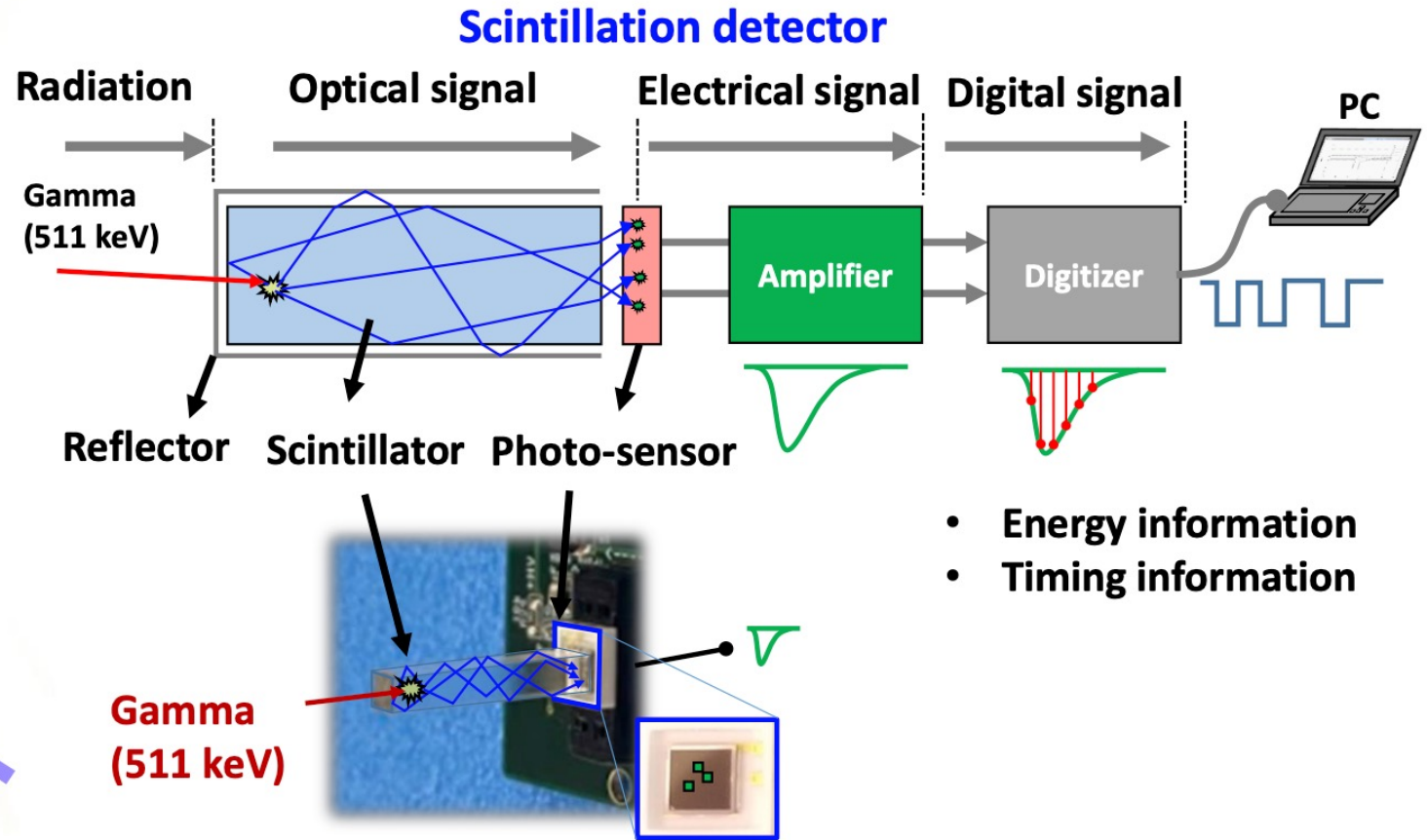
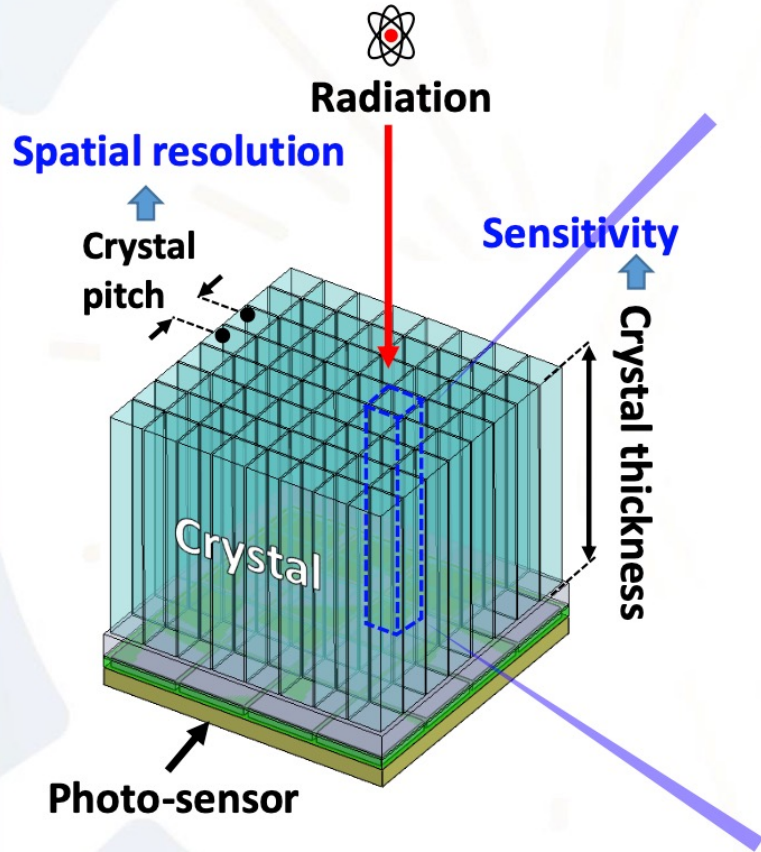
Emission imaging

SPECT

Single photon emission computed tomography



Emission imaging



Workflow for medical imaging system development

GATE simulation can be used for

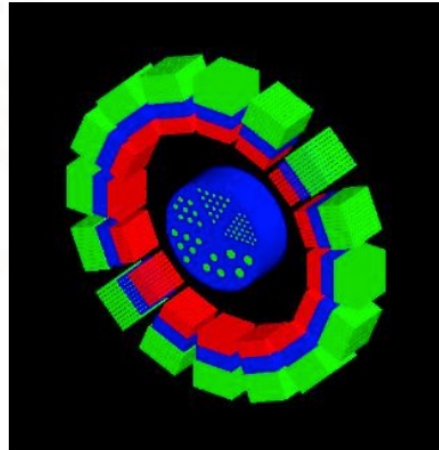
- ✓ **Concept verification** of your new idea
- ✓ **Optimization** of a new imaging system

New idea on imaging system



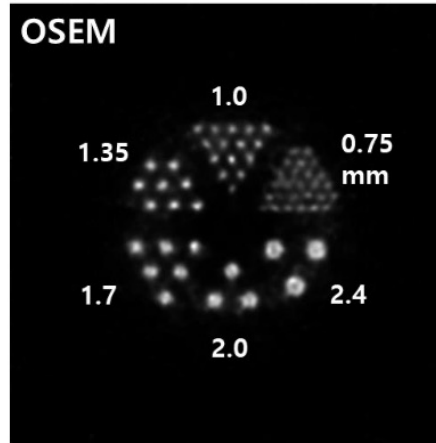
From the perspective of hardware engineers

GATE simulation



- ✓ **Scanner modeling**
- ✓ **Concept verification**

Image reconstruction



- ✓ **Image quality check**
- ✓ **Find any problem**

Development of a new PET system*



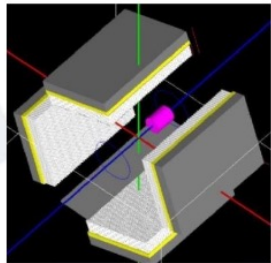
- ✓ **Prototyping**
- ✓ **Performance evaluation**

Optimization and debugging

Predefined geometry to simplify the simulation

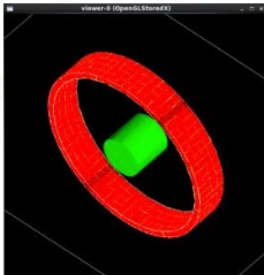
SPECT

SPECThead
crystal
pixel



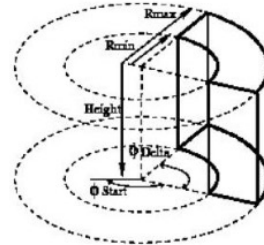
PET ECAT

ecat
block
crystal



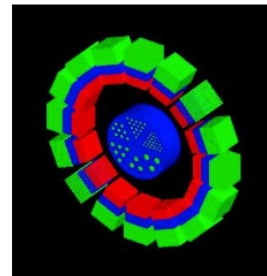
Cylindrical PET

cylindricalPET
rsector
module
crystal
layer0
layer1



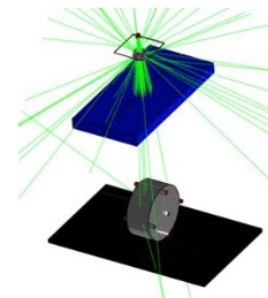
PET scanner

PETscanner
level1
level2
level3
level4
level5



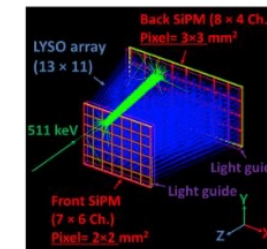
CT scanner

CTscanner
module
cluster
pixel



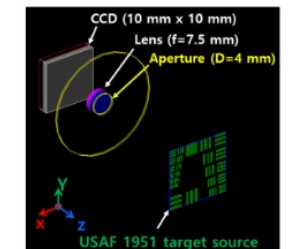
scanner

scanner
level1
level2
level3
level4
level5



Optical system

OpticalSystem
crystal
pixel

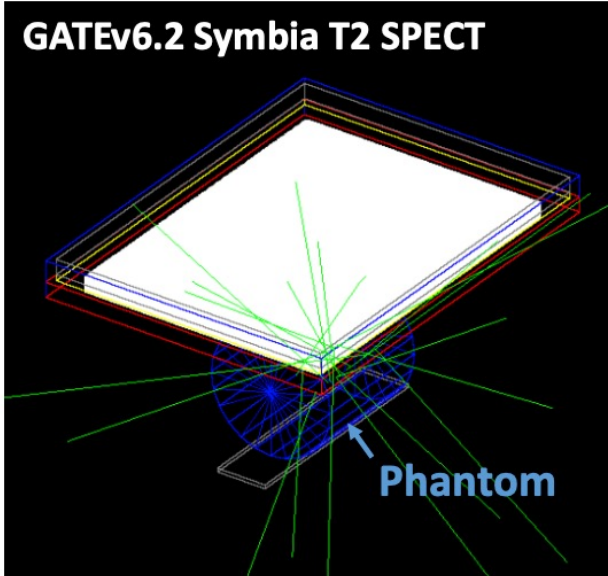


Examples: clinical SPECT simulations

SIEMENS Symbia T2 SPECT/CT



GATE Single head SPECT simulation



GATE projection output (*.sin)

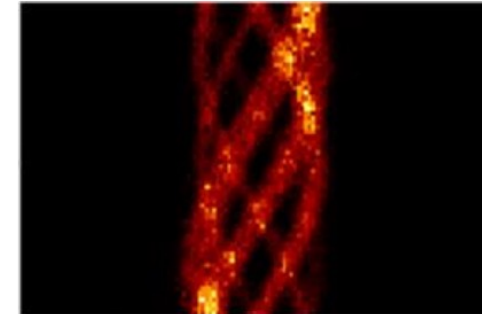
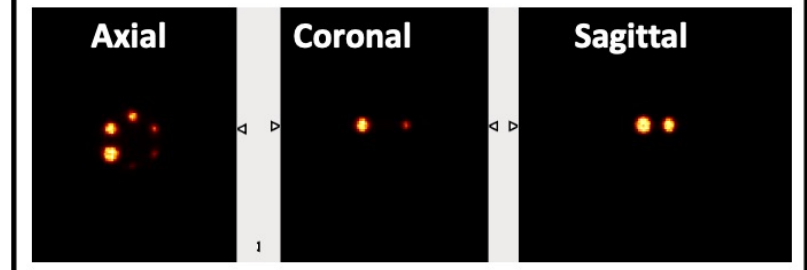


Image reconstruction using STIR*

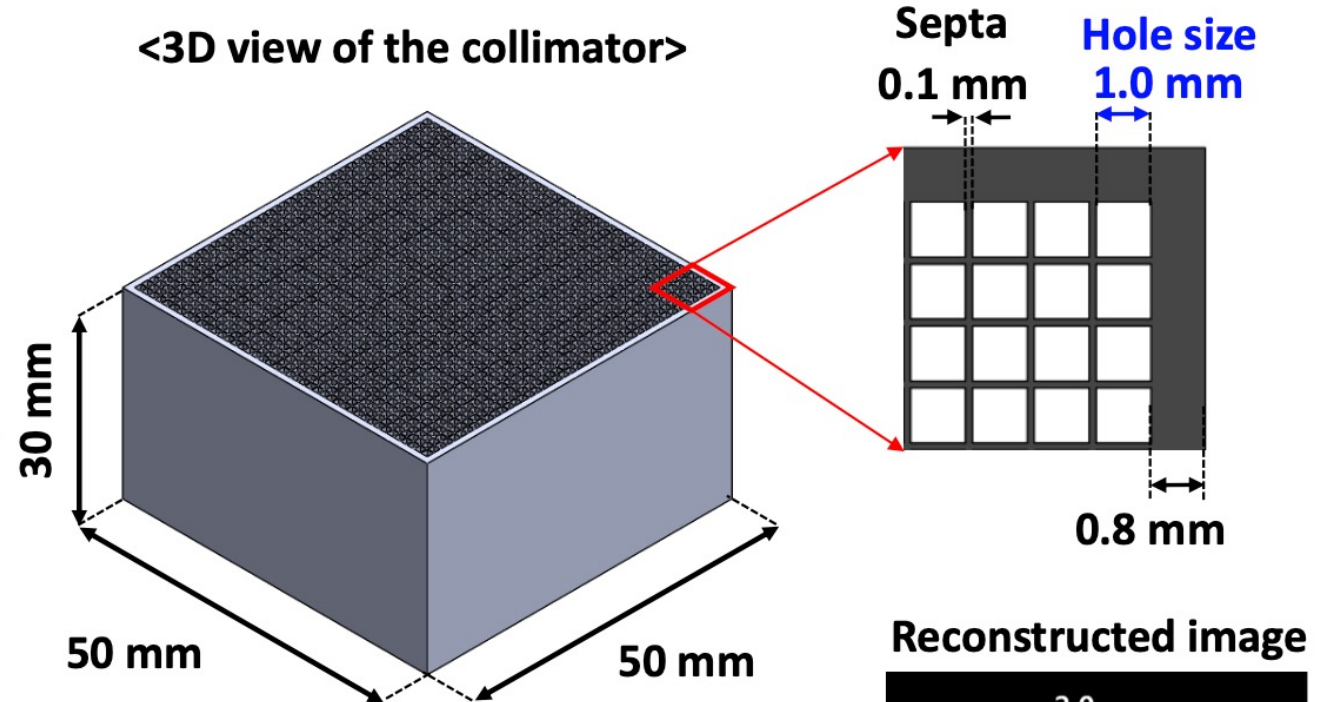
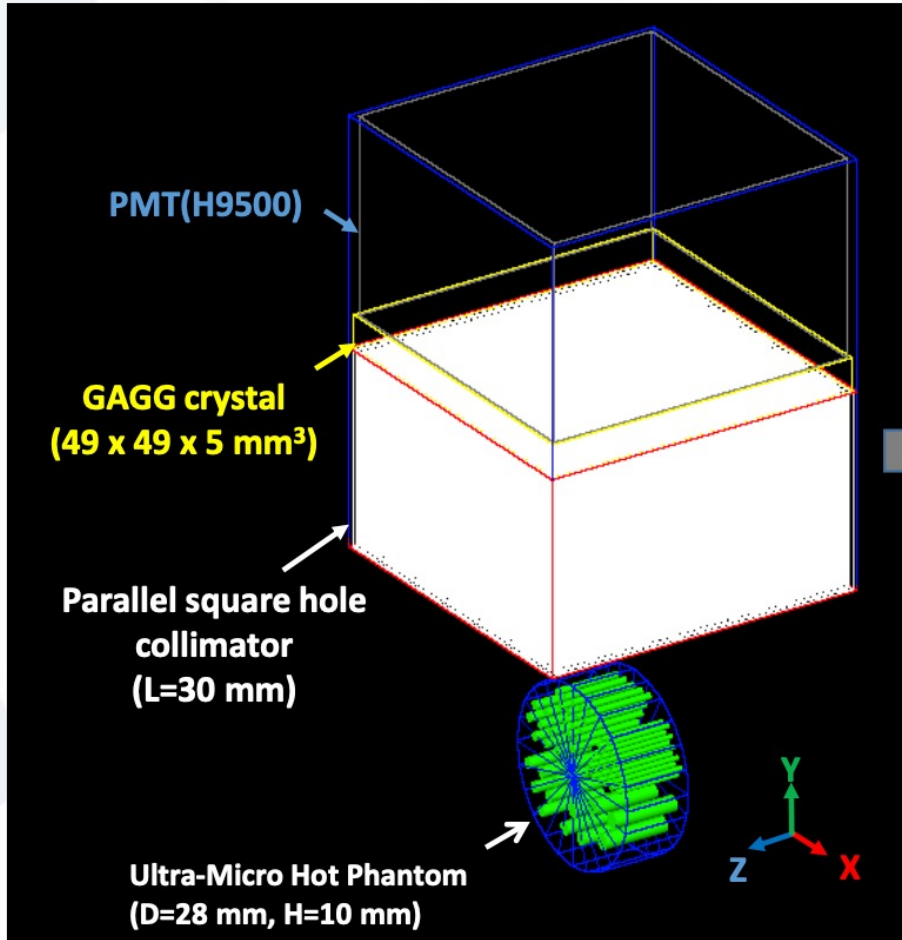


What you need to set in GATE

- Collimator
- Scintillator(=crystal)
- Detector response
- Phantom
- Source

Examples: small animal SPECT imaging

Dedicated small animal SPECT

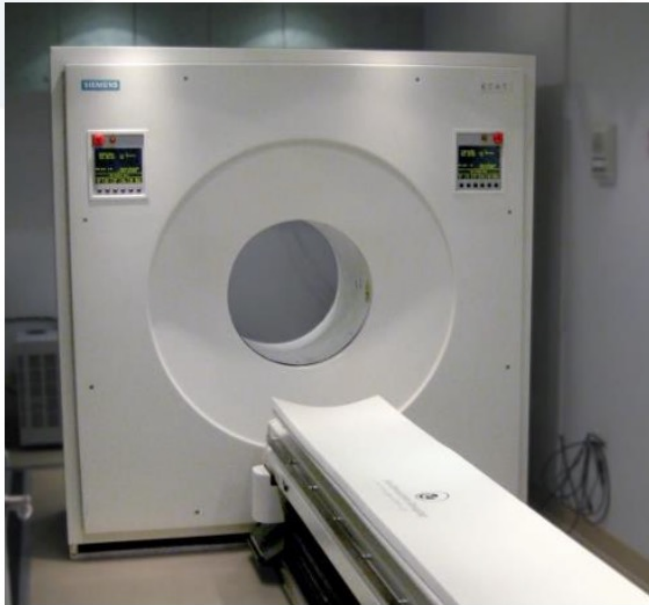


What you need to set in GATE

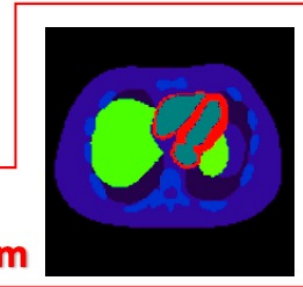
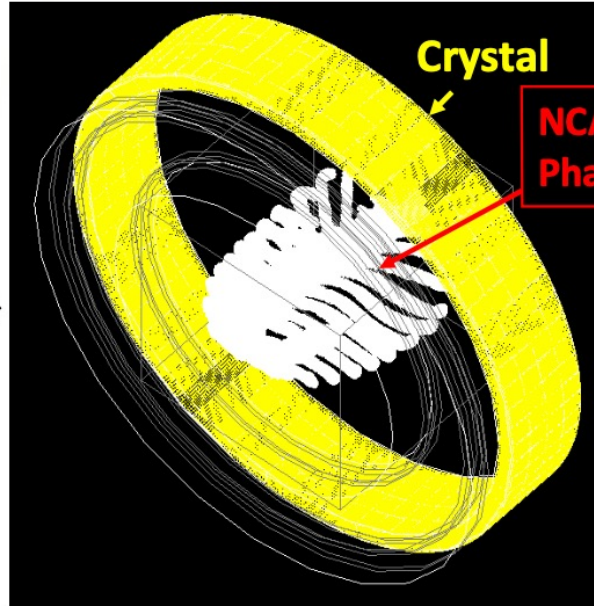
- Collimator
- Scintillator(=crystal)
- Detector response

Examples: clinical PET imaging

SIEMENS ECAT PET scanner



GATE ECAT PET scanner



GATE ECAT7 sinogram output(*.S)

Image reconstruction using STIR*

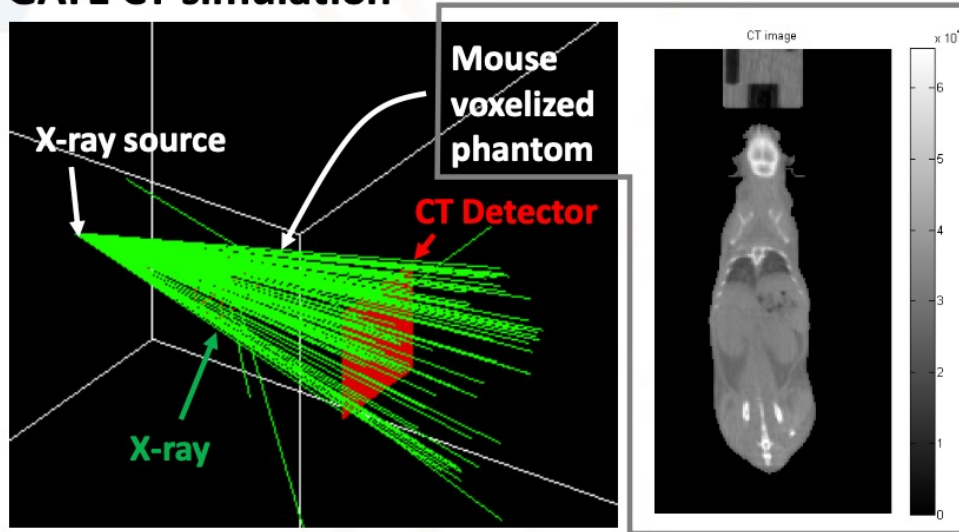


What you need to set in GATE

- Crystal
- Detector response
- Phantom
- Source

Examples: small animal CT imaging

GATE CT simulation

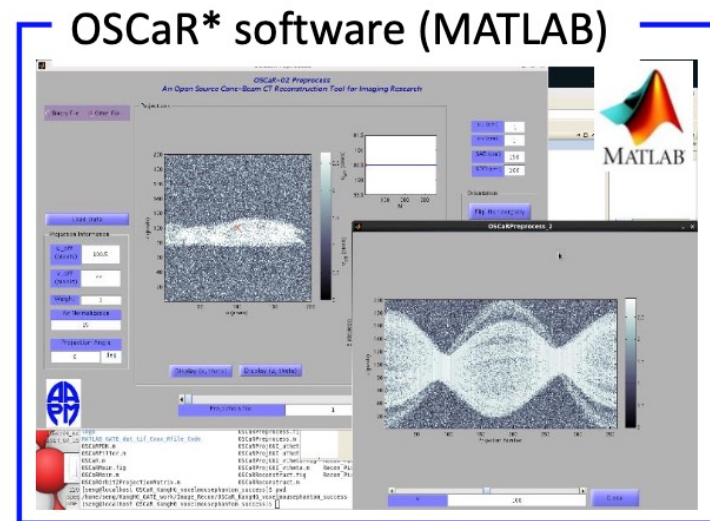


What you need to set in GATE

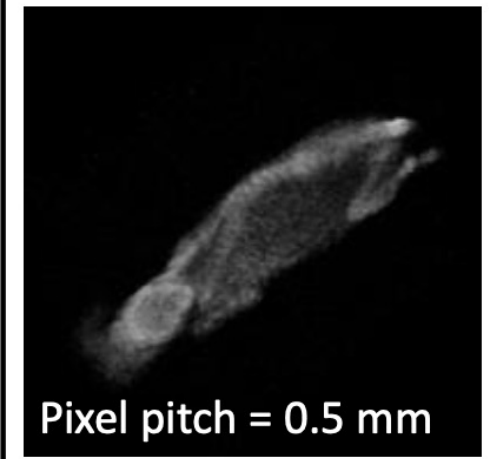
- X-ray source (SRS78 software)
- Mouse phantom (Voxelized)
- CT detector response

GATE projection output (*.dat)

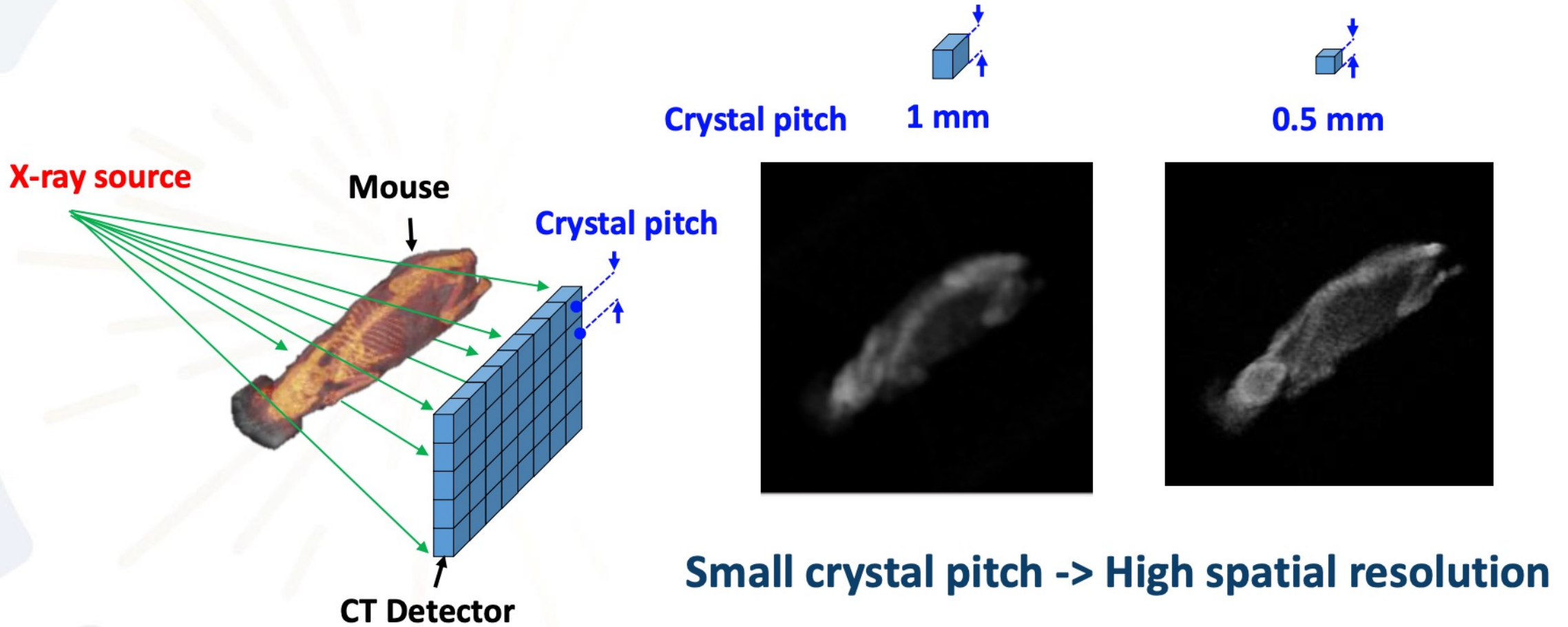
Data format conversion to CSV



Reconstructed CT image



Examples: crystal pitch vs spatial resolution



Examples: simulation of light transport in scintillation detectors

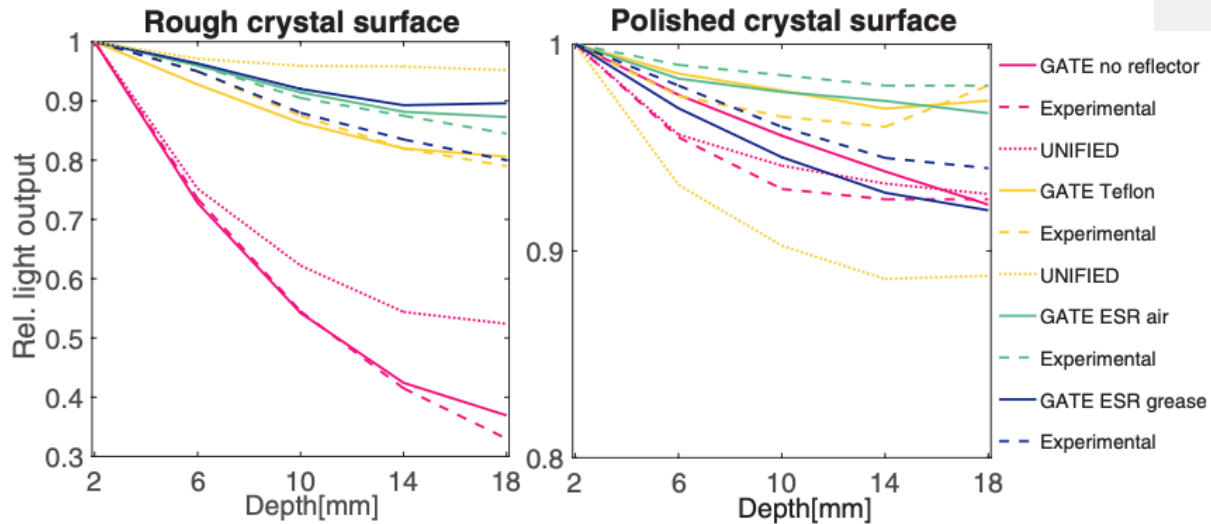
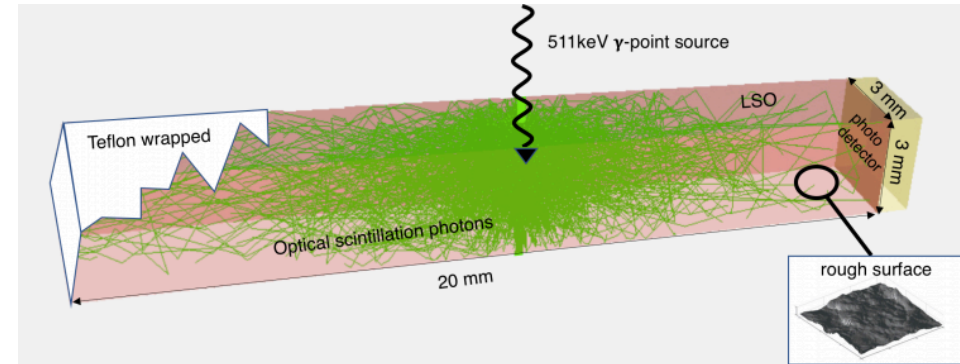


Figure 6. The relative LO as a function of DOI is shown for experimental data and the implemented LUT Davis model in GATE. Trends for different surfaces are normalized by their maximum LO. In contrast, the UNIFIED model shows large variations from the experimental data past the 6 mm DOI position, because inaccuracies in the reflection model add up as the photons undergo more reflections.

IOP Publishing | Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine
Phys. Med. Biol. 62 (2017) L1–L8

Physics in Medicine & Biology

<https://doi.org/10.1088/1361-6560/aa7007>

Letter

Advanced optical simulation of scintillation detectors in GATE V8.0: first implementation of a reflectance model based on measured data

Mariele Stockhoff¹, Sebastien Jan², Albertine Dubois³,
Simon R Cherry¹ and Emilie Roncali¹

PAPER

An integrated model of scintillator-reflector properties for advanced simulations of optical transport

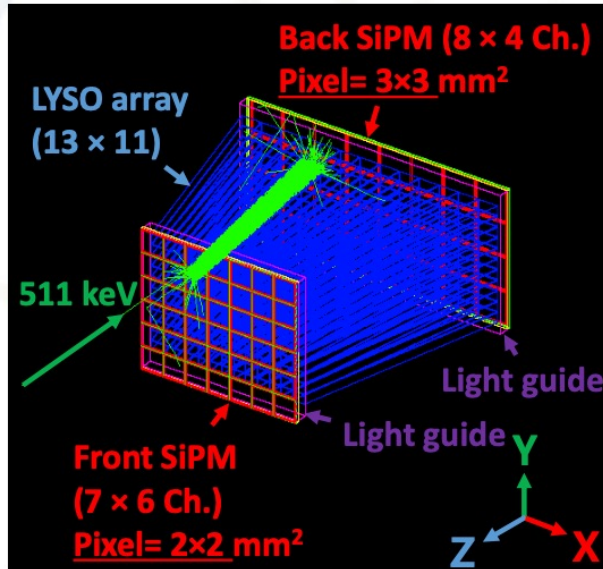
Emilie Roncali, Mariele Stockhoff and Simon R Cherry

Published 18 May 2017 • © 2017 Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine

[Physics in Medicine & Biology, Volume 62, Number 12](#)

Examples: Simulation of optical photons within a detector

GATE optical simulation



ASCII output
(Singles.dat)



MATLAB code
(Custom-written)

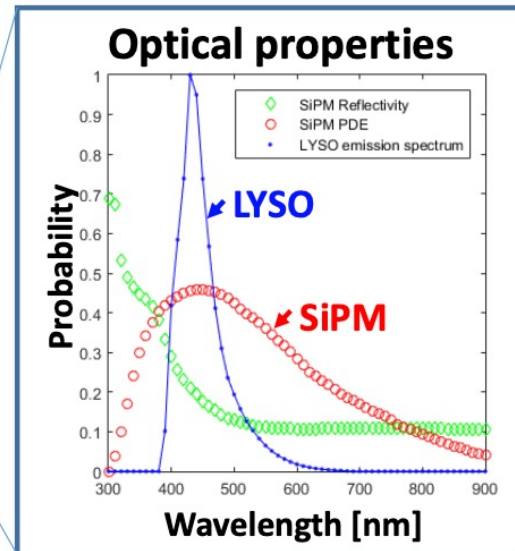
- ✓ EventID sorting
- ✓ Assign the SiPM pixel ID
- ✓ Generate the flood map

What you need to set in GATE

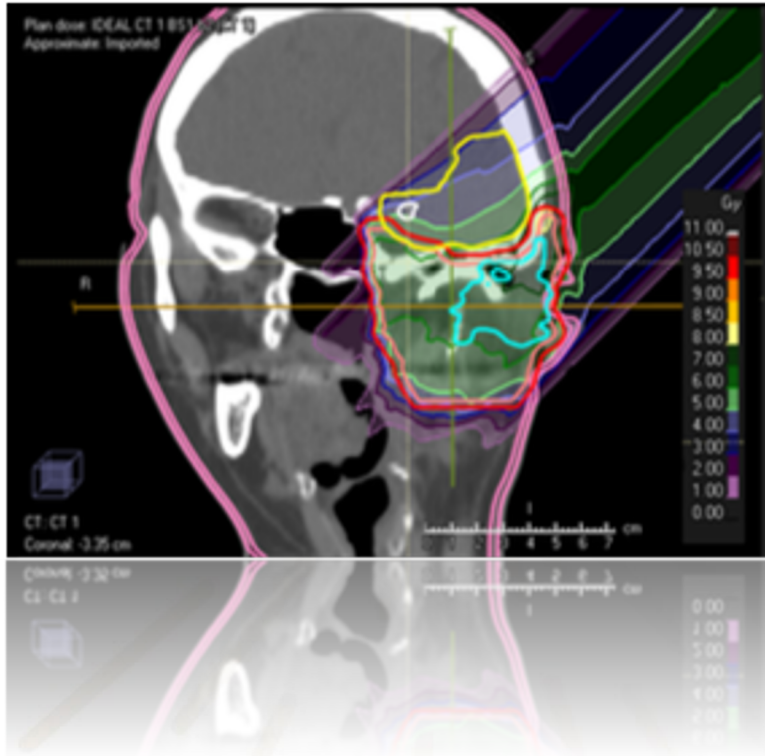
- Optical properties of Crystal (Materials.xml)
- Optical properties of SiPM (Surfaces.xml)
- Digitizer (adder -> opticaladder)

```
/gate/digitizer/Singles/insert adder
```

```
/gate/digitizer/Singles/insert opticaladder
```

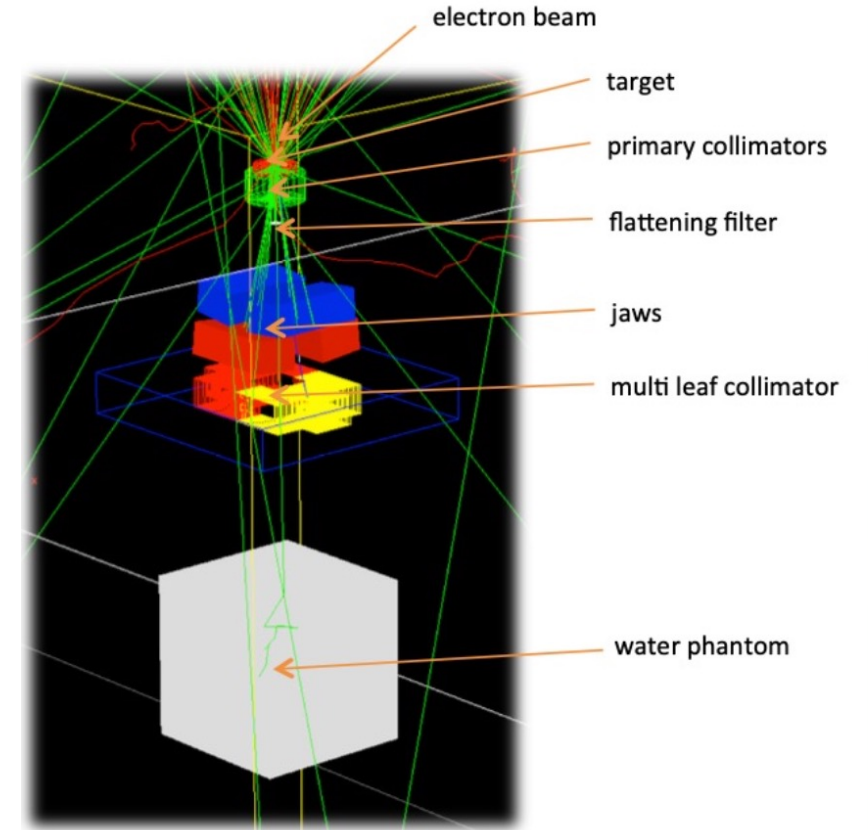
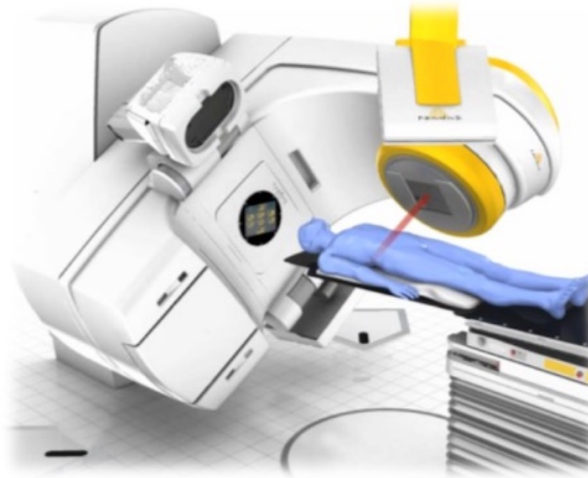
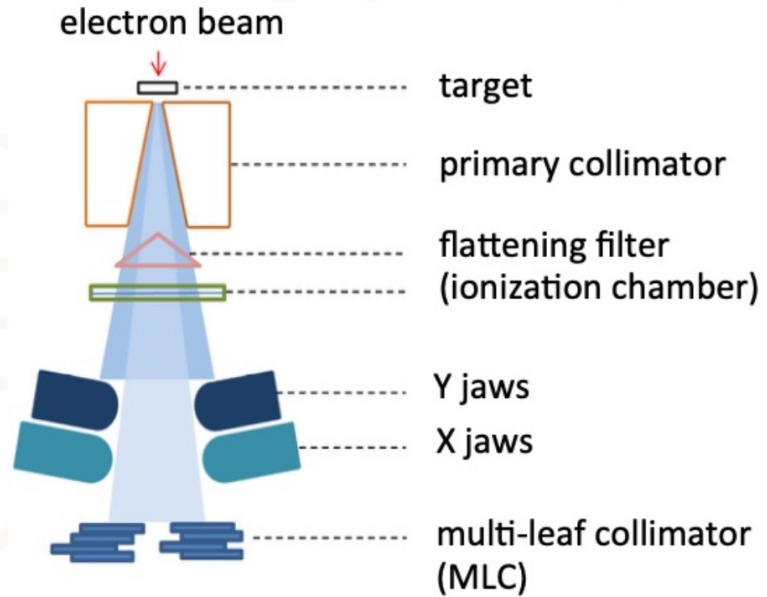


Goal: Modeling of a scintillation detector with dual-ended readout configuration



Therapy

External RT using electrons and photons



1. Accelerator modeling

- Geometry
- phase space sources

2. Patient modeling

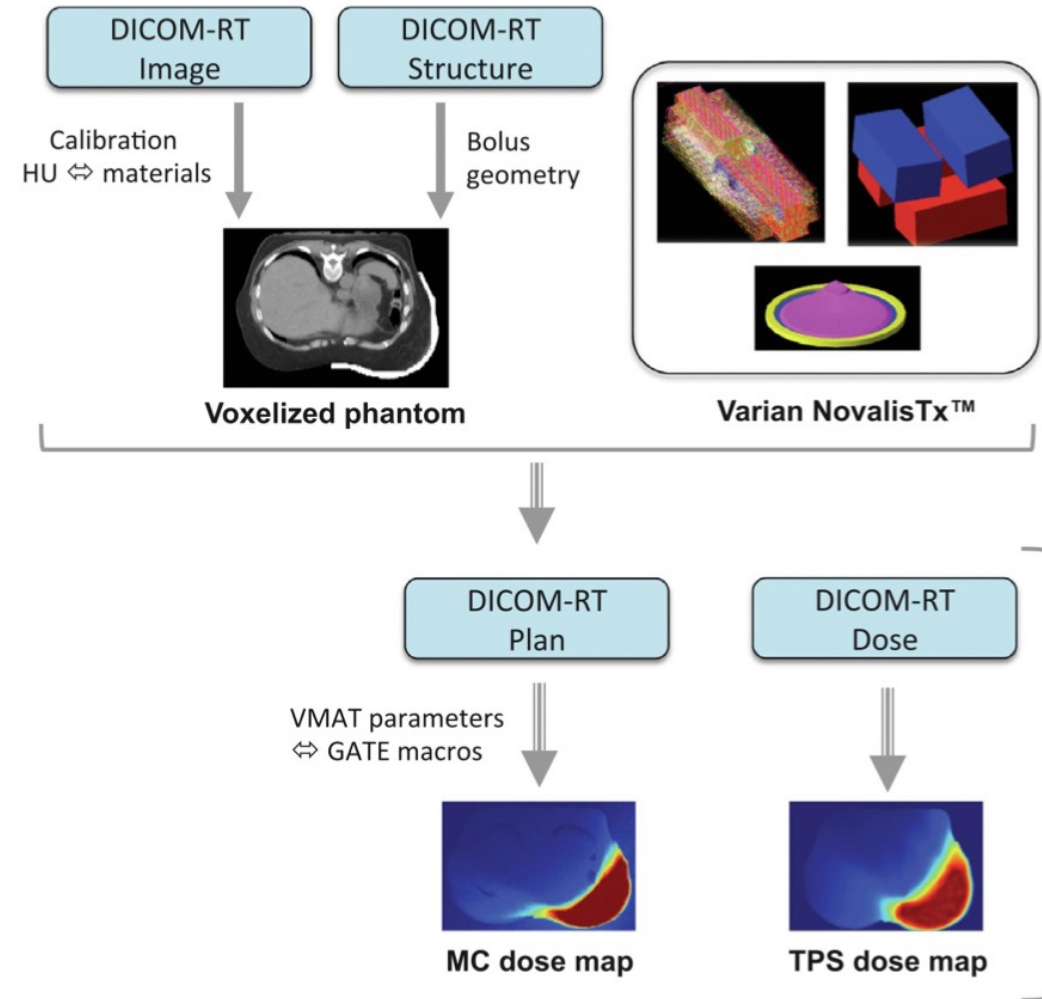
- voxelized phantom
- additional structures

3. Treatment parameters

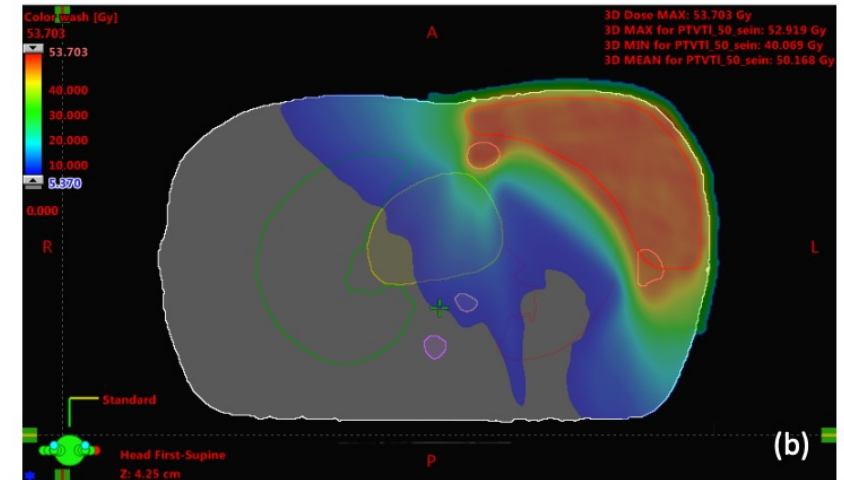
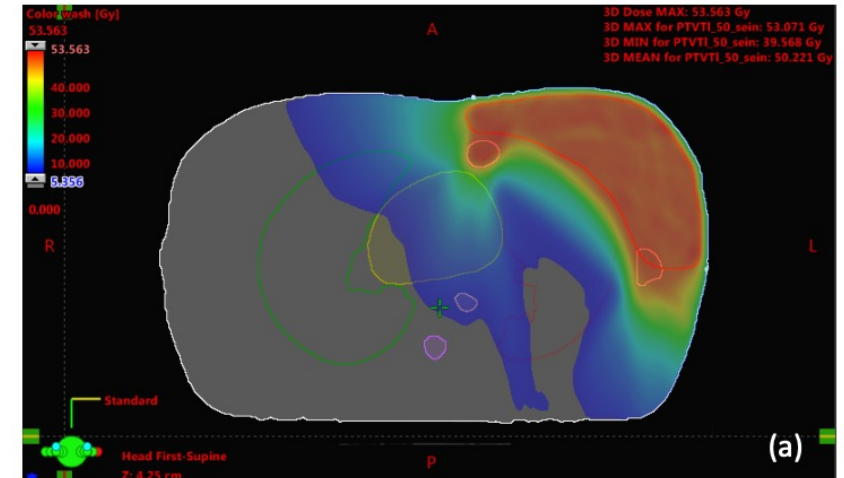
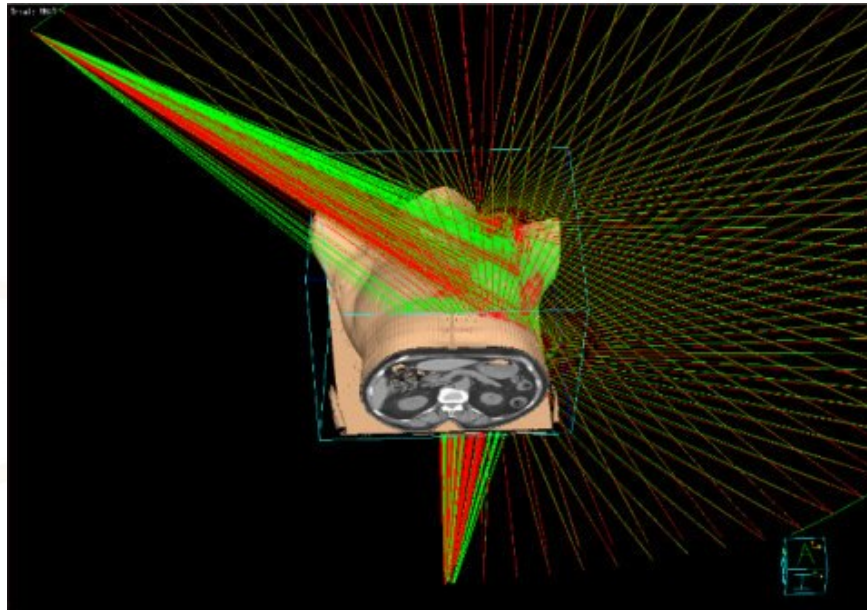
- DICOM-RT Plan

4. Dose computation

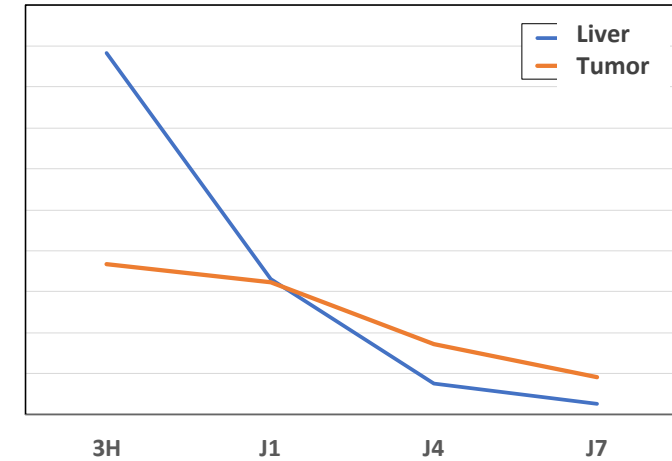
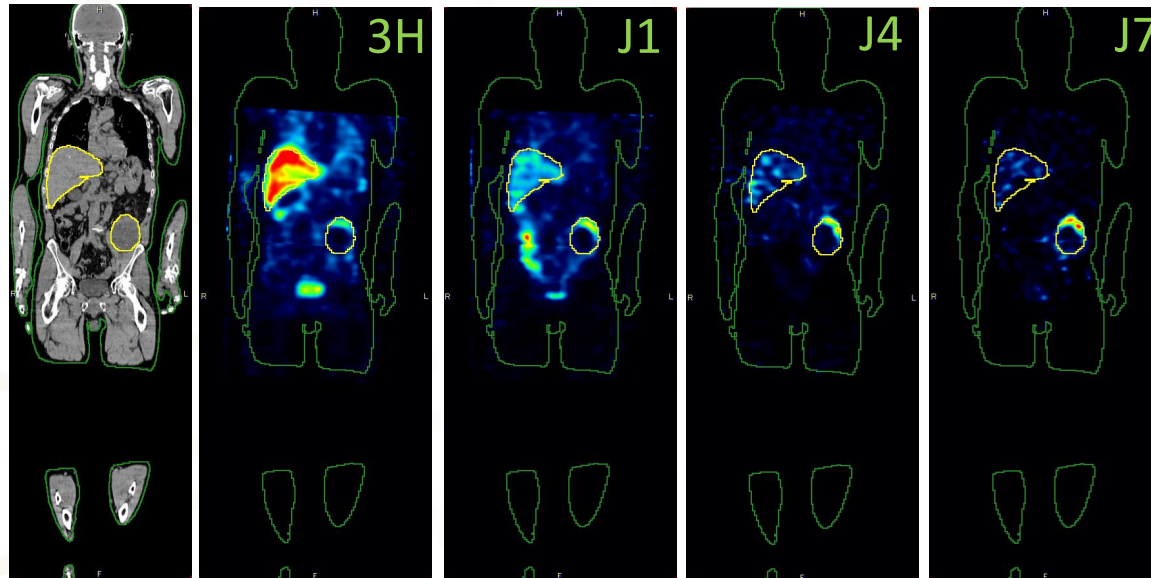
- dose actor
- analysis tools (Python, ROOT, ITK, ...)



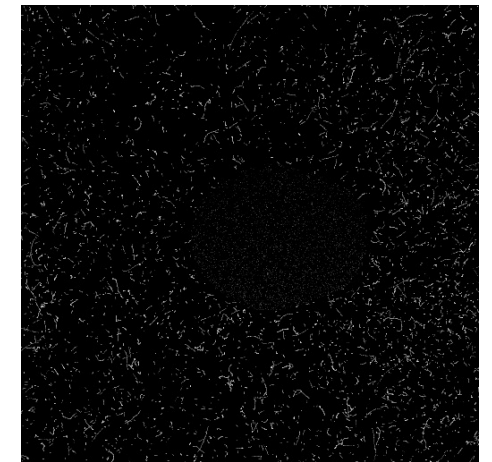
Examples: Evaluating 3D distributions of superficial dose in Volumetric Arc therapy (VMAT)



TPS dose maps for VMAT planning without (a) and with a 5 mm bolus (b)

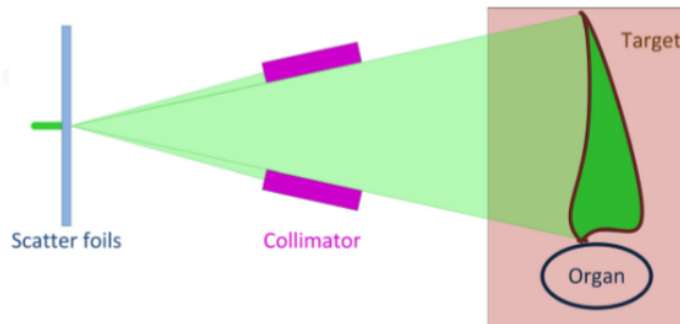


Clinical dosimetry to assess dose to liver and tumor
 800 MBq/m² till 4000 MBq/m² to provide 40 Gy max to the tumor

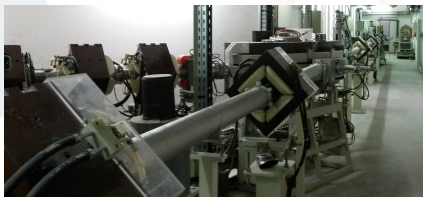
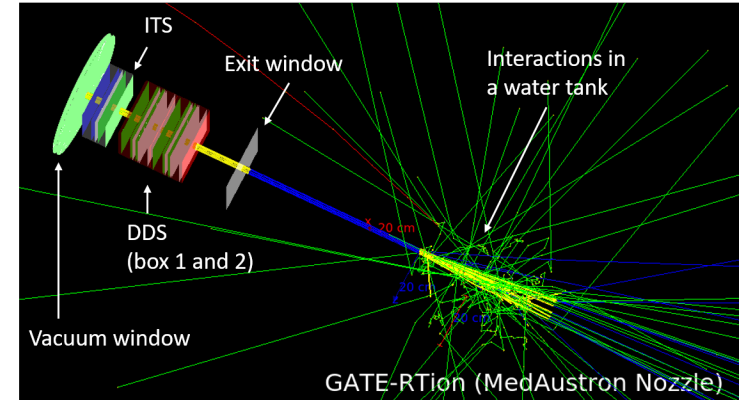
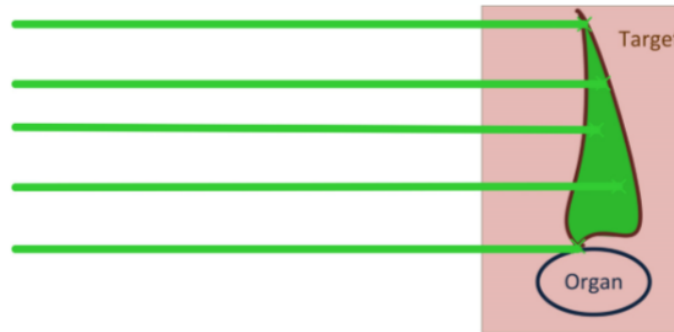


Hadrontherapy

Passive scattering



Pencil beam scanning



MediCyc 65 MeV clinical beam line
Centre Antoine Lacassagne



Picture: C. Winterhalter, ETH Diss 25698



Also: IBA Proteus One
235 MeV

Picture: <https://www.psi.ch/en/protontherapy/gantry-3>, 05/02/20

- **Goals**

- Foster collaboration between clinical partners and laboratories to improve treatment delivery
- Passive and PBS proton and carbon beams quality assurance
- Clinical applications
- Cross validation with TPS

- **3 clinical partners involved**

- **The Centre Antoine Lacassagne** (France): IBA PT Synchro-Cyclotron (S2C2) machine with **proton energy range 70-230 MeV**
- **The Christie NHS Foundation Trust** (UK): Varian ProBeam (Cyclotron) machine with **proton energy range 70-245 MeV**
- **MedAustron** (Austria) : MAPTA (Synchrotron) machine with **proton and carbon ion energy ranges of 60-250 MeV and 120-400 MeV/n, respectively**

- **The Centre Antoine Lacassagne (Nice, France): Proton radiography images**
- Proton radiography images of the anthropomorphic human head phantom were compared
 - RayStation 6.0 TPS,
 - GATE-RT-ion
 - Lynx 2D scintillator (IBA)
- Results compared with MyQA software (IBA)
 - γ -index analysis (2%, 2mm) between GATE-RTion simulations and TPS, more than 95% of the pixels passed the test.

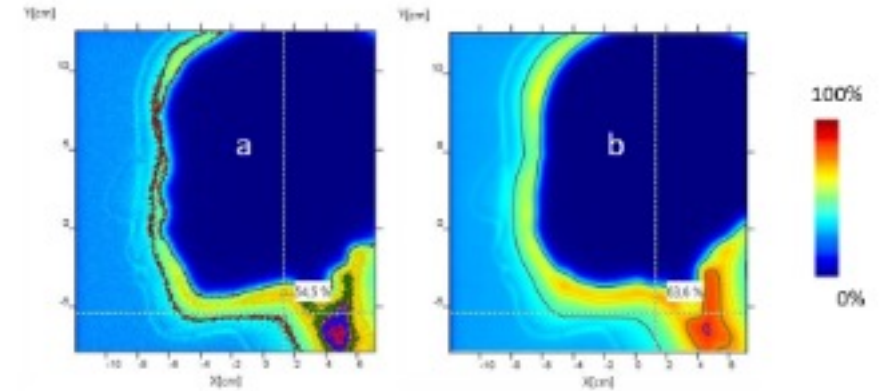
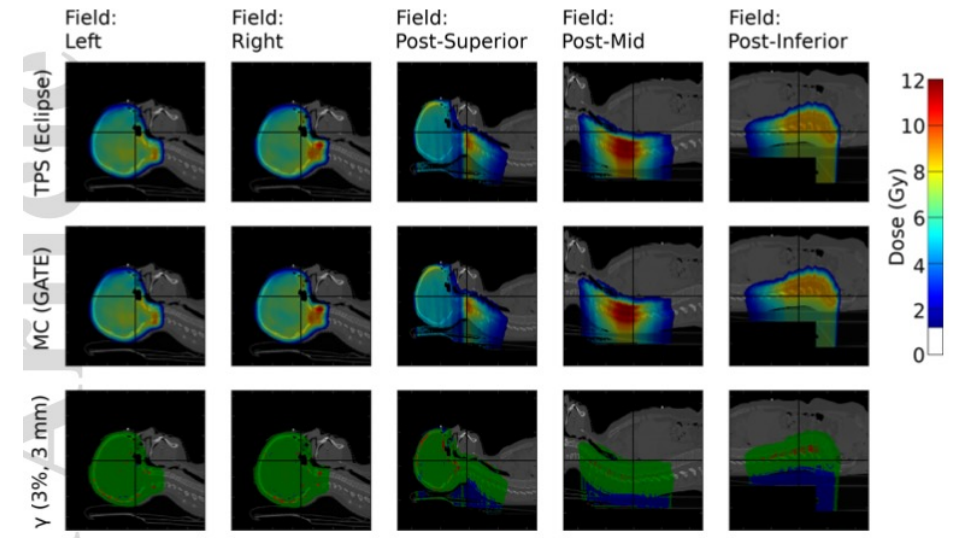


Figure 1: Relative comparison of a GATE dose simulation (a) and a 2D Lynx measurement (b) acquired at the same downstream position for an anthropomorphic phantom. An arbitrary dose scale is used between 100% (red) and 0% (dark blue) - same for both relative dose distributions.

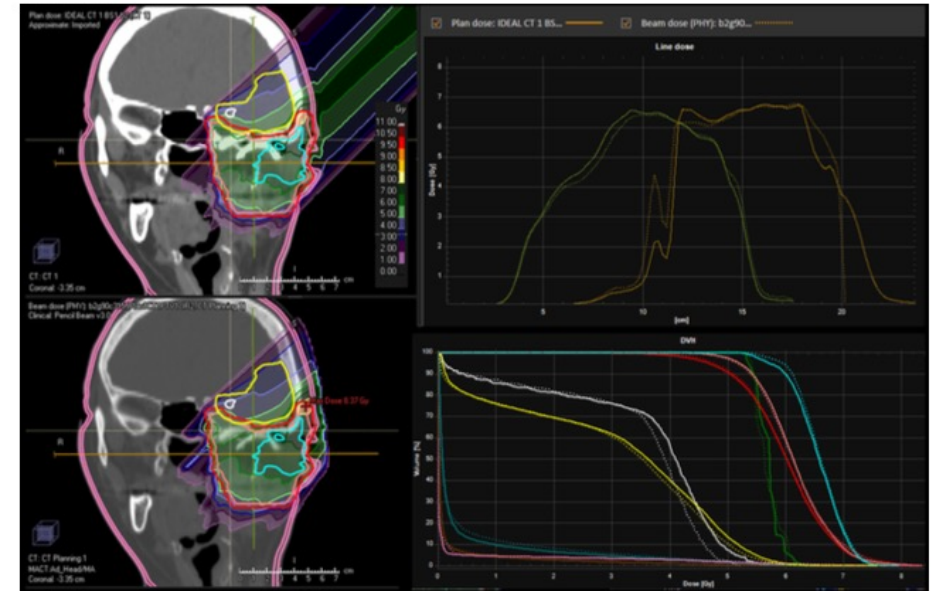
- Independent Dose Calculation of proton beam therapy plans at The Christie
- Varian Eclipse (version 13.7) TPS
- GATE-RTion (**AUTOMC**, Aitkenhead, Br J Radiol 2020)
- 23.4 Gy in 13 fractions, delivered using 5 fields: a pair of left/right fields to the brain, and 3 fields to the spine (superior, mid and inferior)
- GATE-RTion simulation was between 1.6% and 2.4% hotter than the TPS in terms of the median dose to the patient.



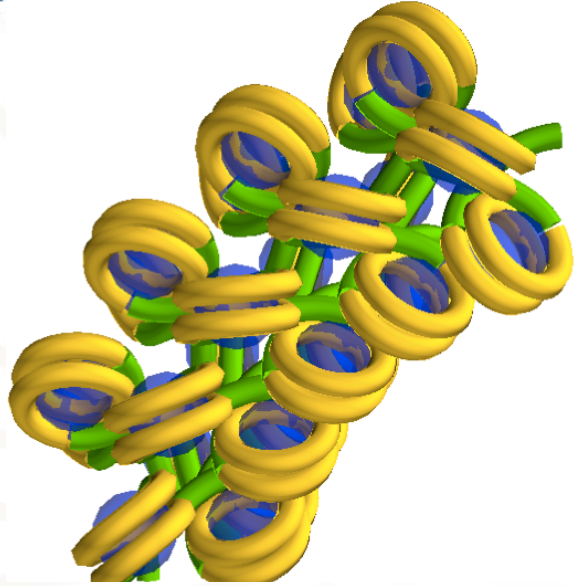
Comparison of TPS (Varian Eclipse) and MC (AutoMC / GATE-RTionV1.0) calculations of a 5-field craniospinal axis proton treatment plan, planned at the Christie

Independent Dose Calculation with Scanned Ion Beams at MedAustron

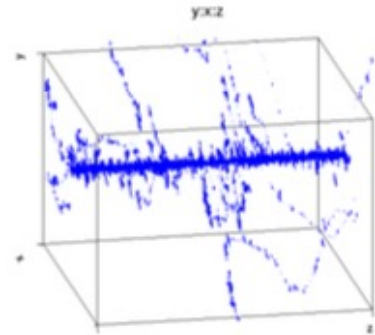
- RayStation version 8B from RaySearch Laboratories
GATE-RTion (**IDEAL: Independent DosE cAlculation for Light ion beam therapy**)
- 3D-block/24 PinPoint ionization chambers type 31015, PTW, Freiburg
- Curative carbon ion treatment up to 65.6 Gy RBE in 16 fractions of 4.1 Gy RBE (4 fractions per week). The PTV1 is treated with 9 fractions up to 36.9 Gy RBE, using 4 beams with a horizontal beam line and table rotations of 315°, 355°, 320° and 360°



Comparison of the physical dose distribution for a carbon ion beam having an oblique incidence in the head region of a patient. IDEAL/GATE-RTion dose distribution (Top left) is compared to the TPS (bottom left)



Multi-scale simulations



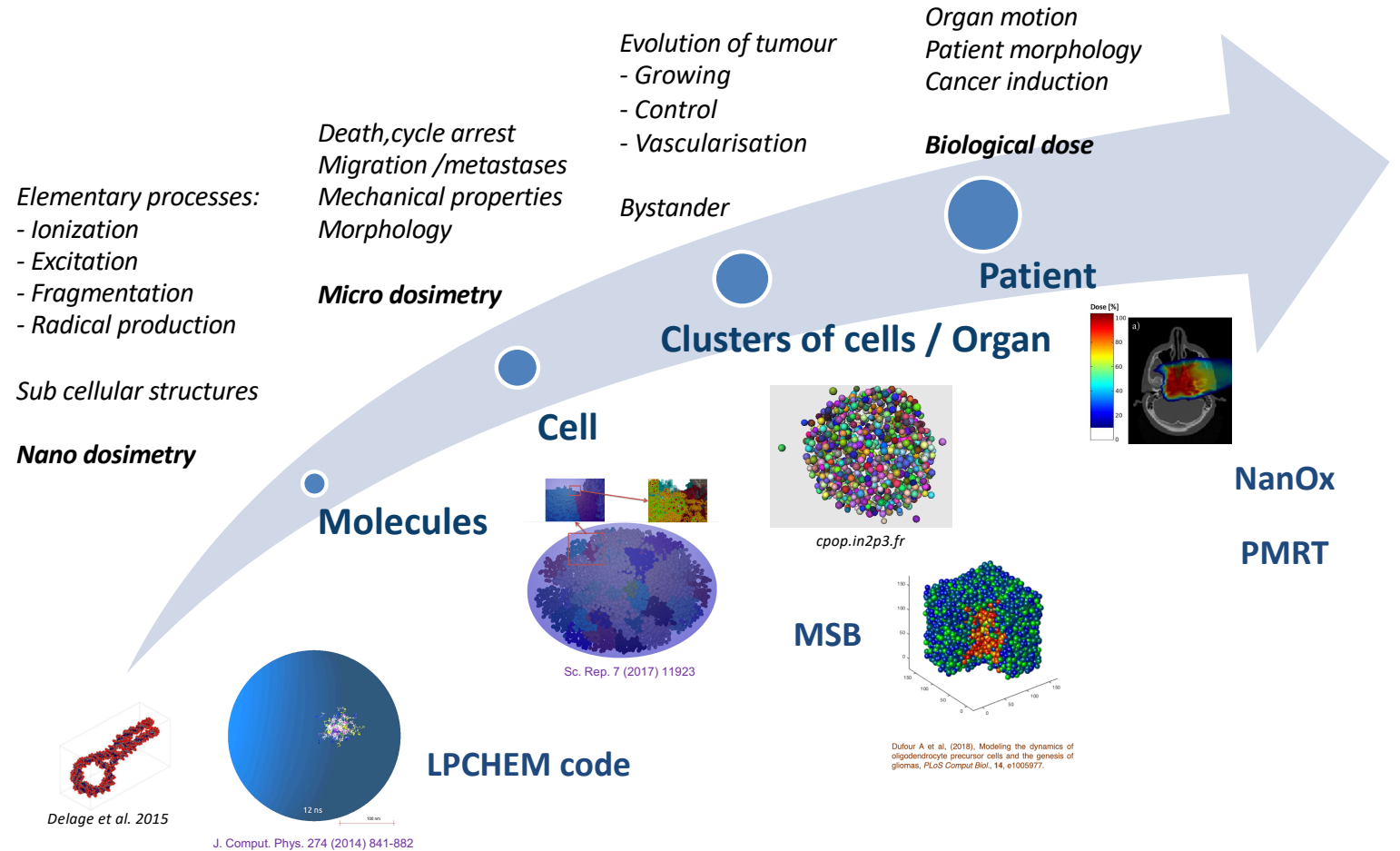
Multi-scale simulations



The **unique** open source and open access simulation toolkit for micro/nano dosimetry and radiation biology

- **Long term development** fully included in Geant4 releases
- International collaboration composed of 42 collaborators
- **Coordinated by IN2P3/CNRS** since 2008
- Funded by regular support from institutions and international calls
- Fruitful involvement in international conferences & tutorials
 - Geant4 International User Conference at the Physics-Medicine-Biology frontier » series of conferences initiated by IN2P3 in 2005
 - Annual international tutorials (17)
- High rank and highly cited publications (104 since 2007)

DEVELOPMENT ACCESSIBLE TO OTHER TOOLKITS, PARTICULARLY TO GATE



Estimate the biological dose in hadrontherapy

BIOLOGICAL DOSE = RBE x PHYSICAL DOSE

Nano/micro scale

Predict biological effect at low scale

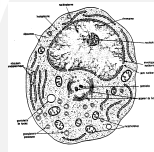
 **mMKM**

(Kase et al., 2006)

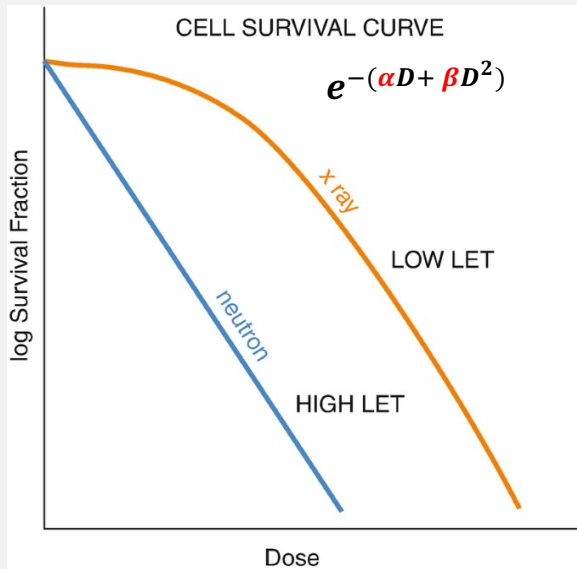
 **NanOx**

(Cunha et al., 2017)

Cellular scale

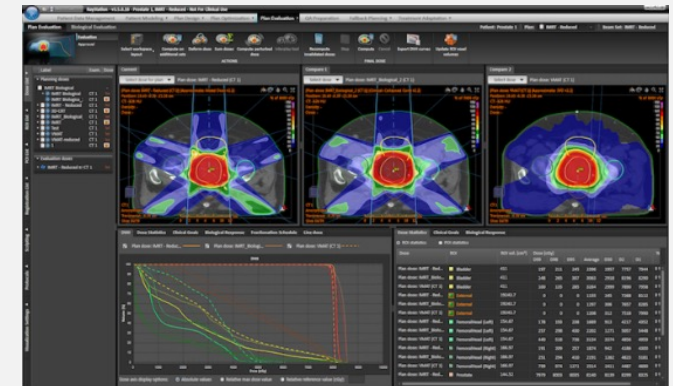


Cell survival estimation

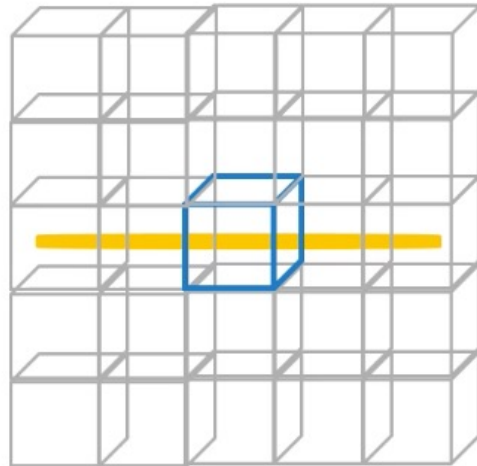


Macro scale

Treatment plan on patient



VOXELIZED TARGET VOLUME



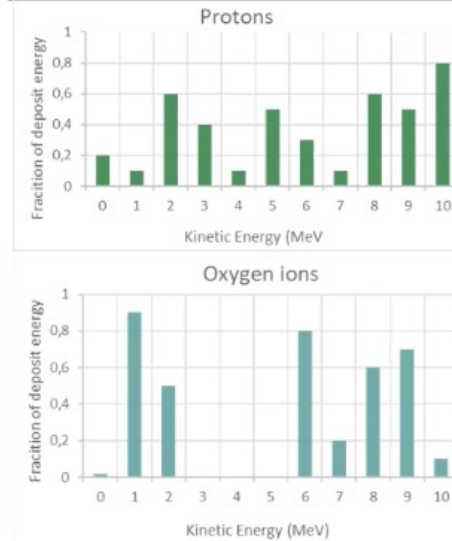
The resolution of the matrix, the size of the voxels, the position of the matrix are initialized via the messenger thanks to the parameters the user set in the macro.

ENERGY DEPOSITION BY STEPS



Is retrieved from each step :
 - The particle type
 - The kinetic energy (pre step point)
 - The energy deposition

PER PARTICLE & PER KINETIC ENERGY



An histogram of the cumulative deposited energy is created for each type of particle as a function of the kinetic energy.

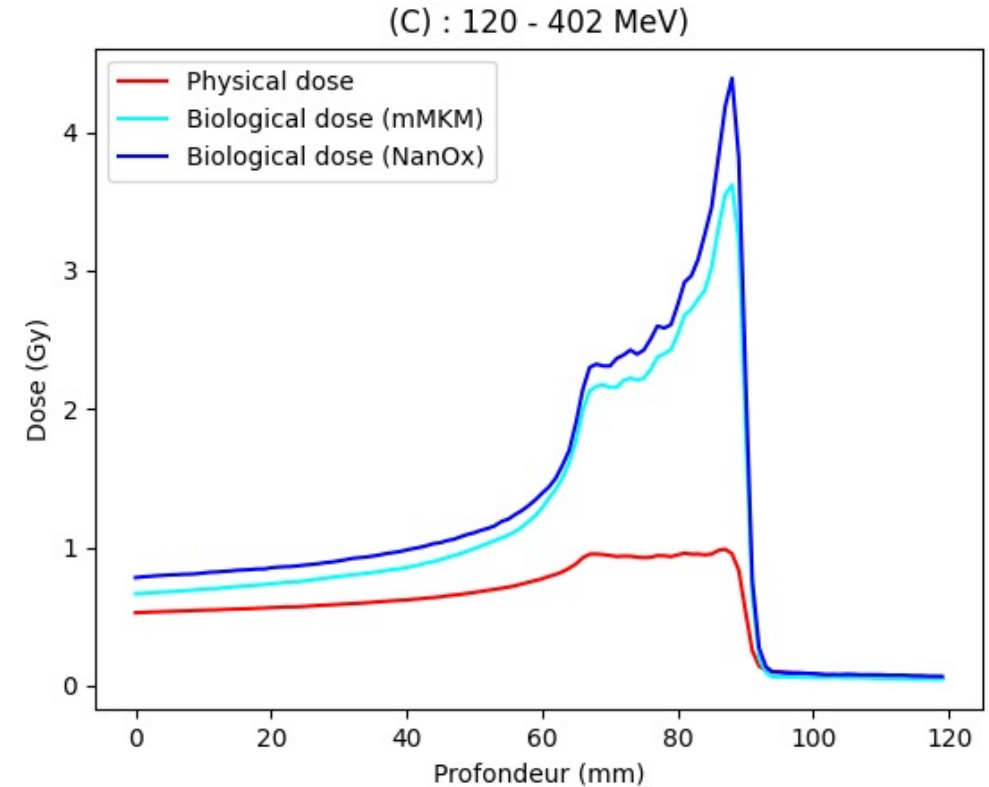
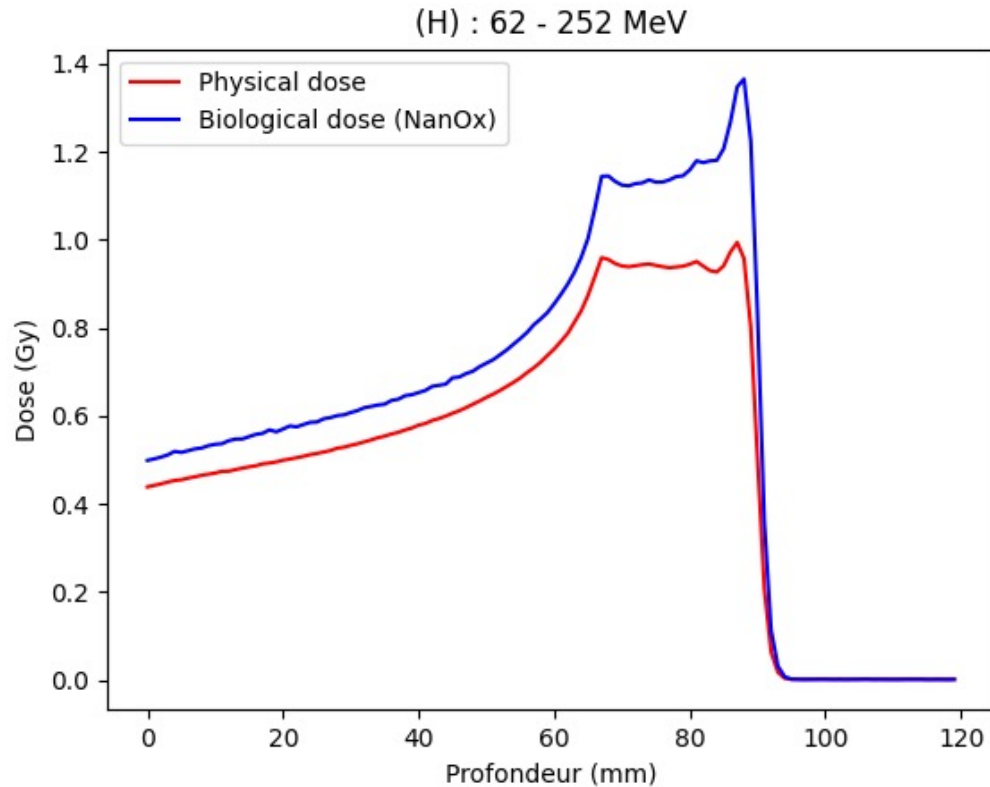
ALPHA BETA MIX CALCULATION

$$\alpha_{mix} = \sum_{k=1}^N f_k \alpha_k$$

$$\beta_{mix} = \sum_{k=1}^N f_k \sqrt{\beta_k}$$

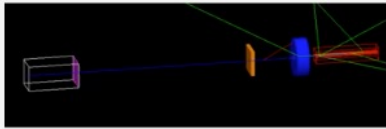
We weight each alpha/beta values with the deposit energy fraction according to obtain the alpha and beta mix values.

Biological dose estimation for proton and carbon ion beams

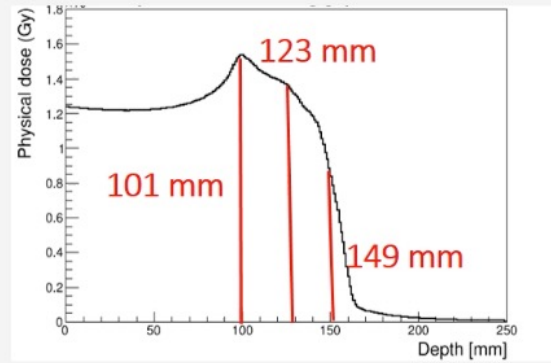


Cell survival estimation

HIMAC LINE



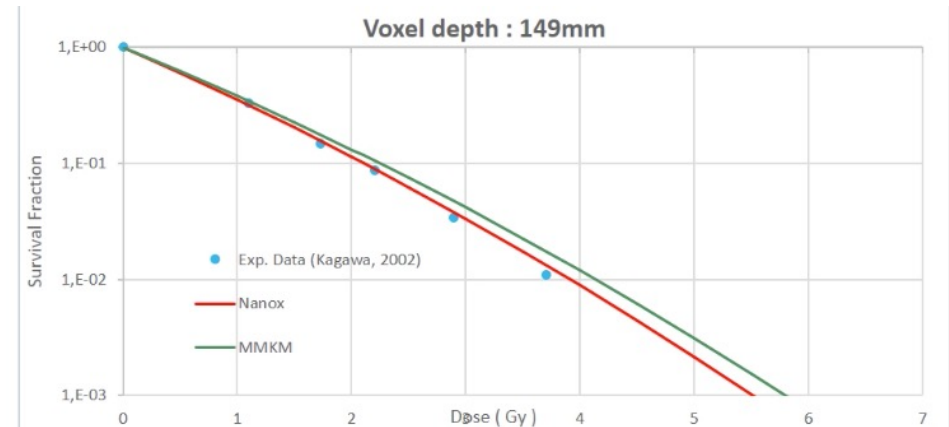
Carbon
Energy: 320 MeV/n
Irradiation mode: passive



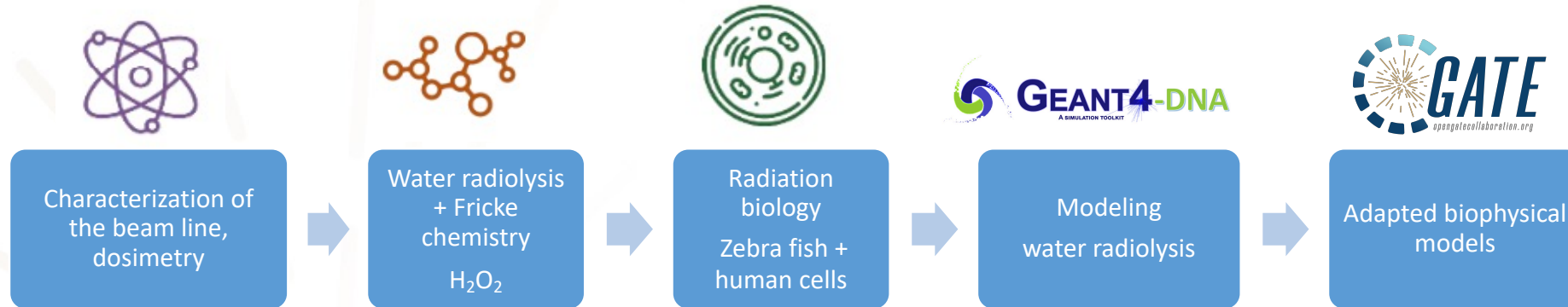
HSG cells irradiated at 3 positions of the SOBP, in 2002.

Kagawa et al. (2002)

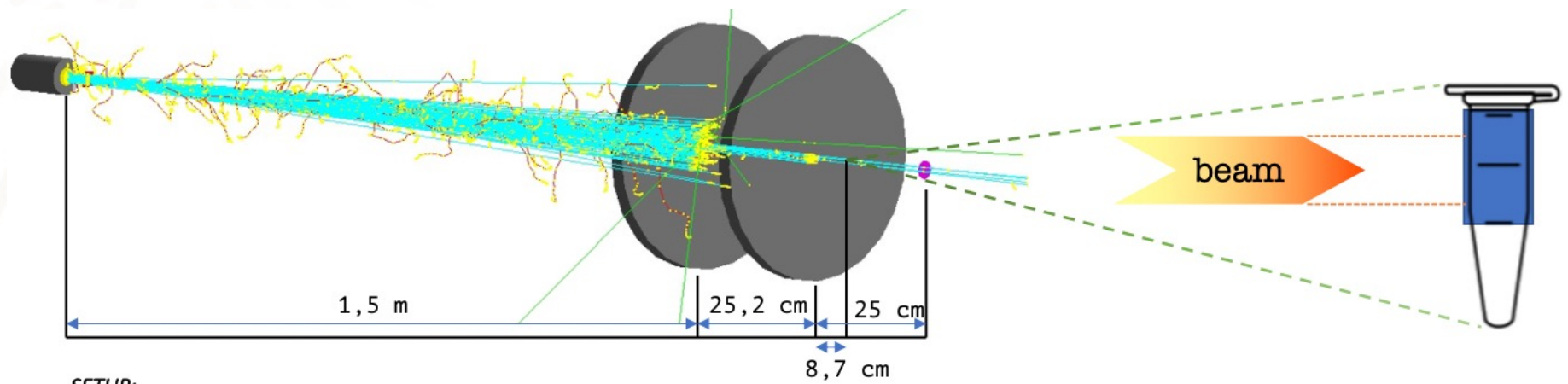
	NanOx				MMKM
IONS	HSG	CHO-K1	V79	SQ20B	HSG
PROTONS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
HELIUM	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CARBON	✓	✓	✓		✓
OXYGEN	✓	✓	✓		✓
NEON	✓	✓	✓		✓



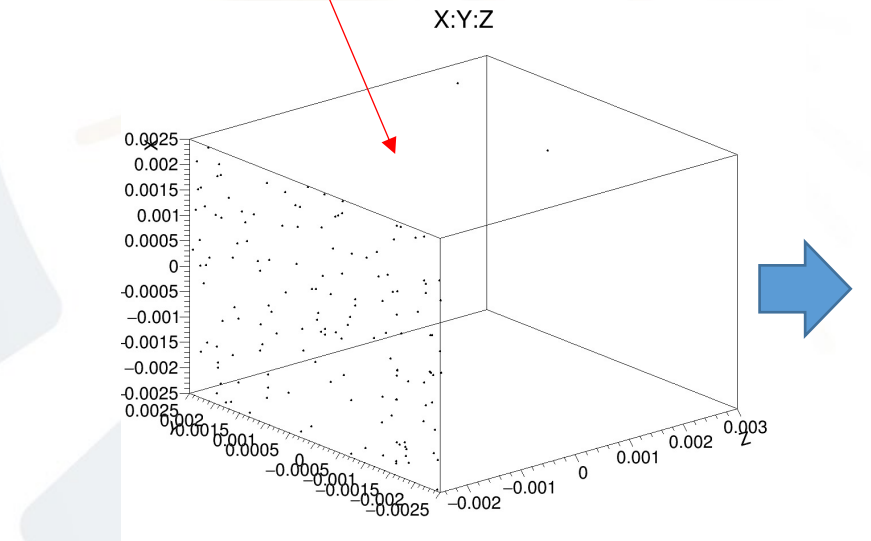
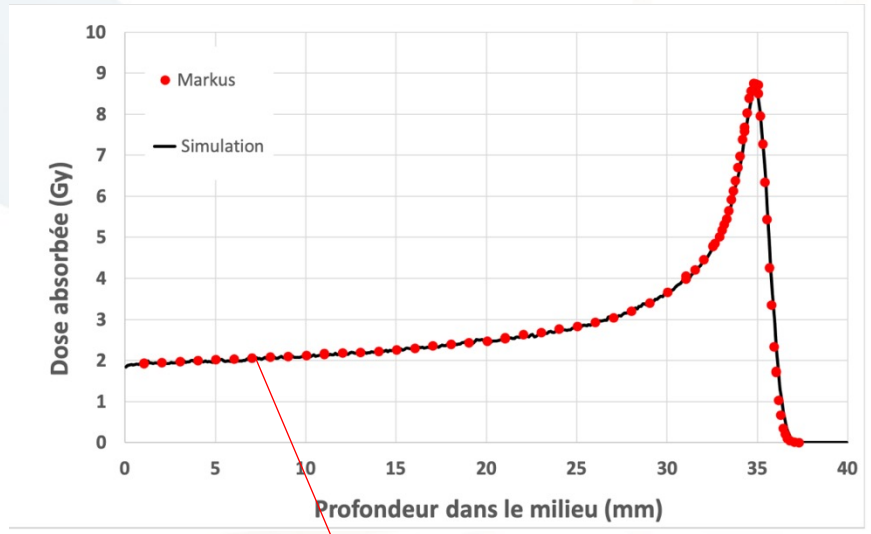
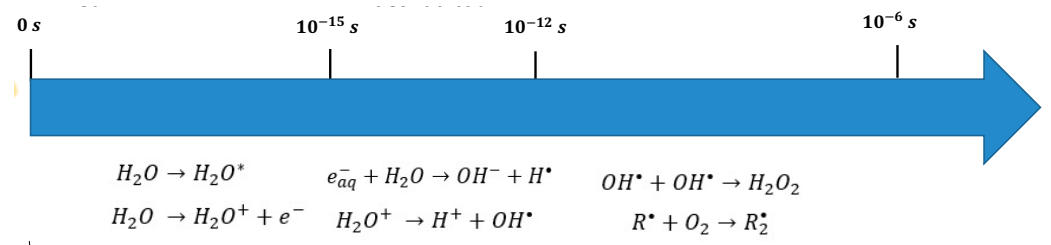
Preclinical proton irradiation at ARRONAX



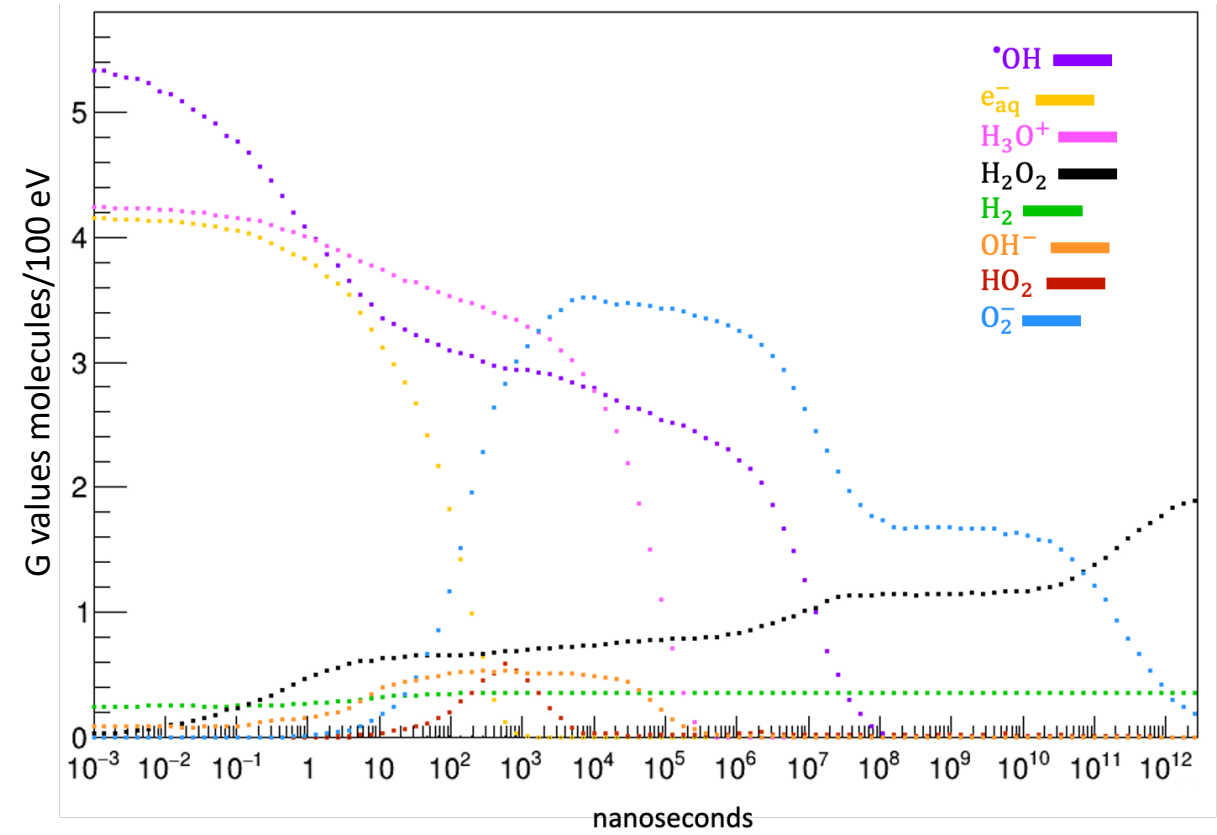
VHDR 67 MeV proton beam
 bunches of protons interspaced by
 32.84 ns
 (micro-pulse, RF = 30.45 MHz)
 Pulse dose rate up to 60 kGy/s



Simulate radical species in water samples



PhaseSpace around the target box



Impact of natural radioactivity in mineral springs

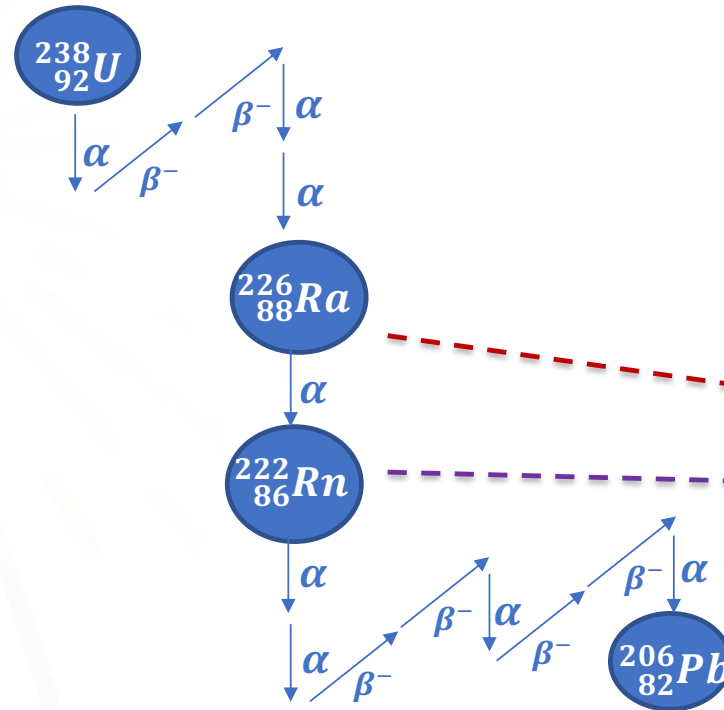
Mineral Springs

- Isolated ecosystems
- Various physicochemical & radiological properties

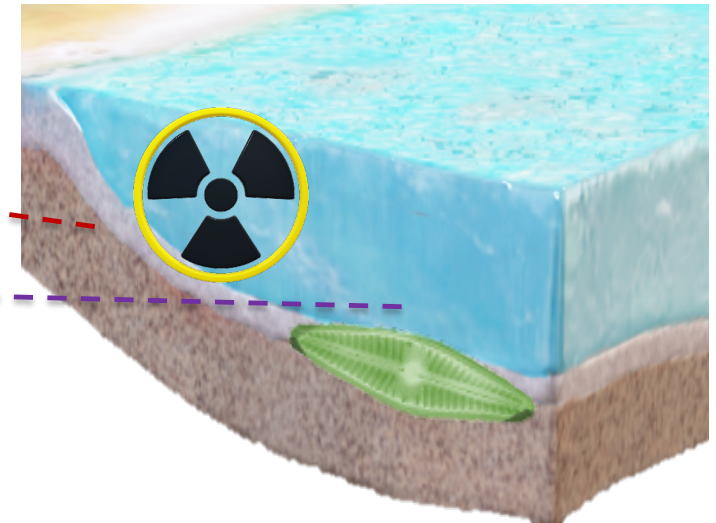


Natural Radioactivity

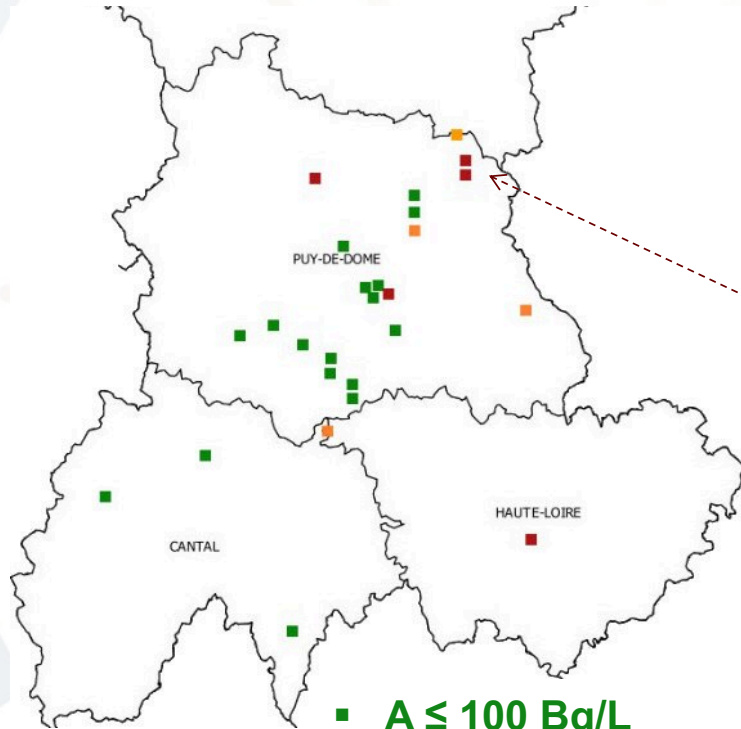
α - emitters : $4 < E_{\alpha} < 9 \text{ MeV}$



Chronic exposure of microorganisms



27 mineral springs



La Montagne
~ 4500 Bq / L

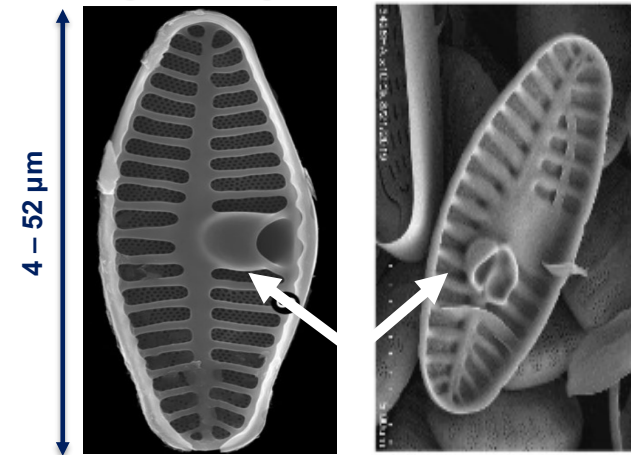


- $A \leq 100$ Bq/L
- $100 \leq A \leq 1000$ Bq/L
- $A \geq 1000$ Bq/L

Diatoms

- Photosynthetic micro-algae (frustule)
- Water quality indicators
- **Stresses** induce teratogenic forms

2.5 – 5.2 μm



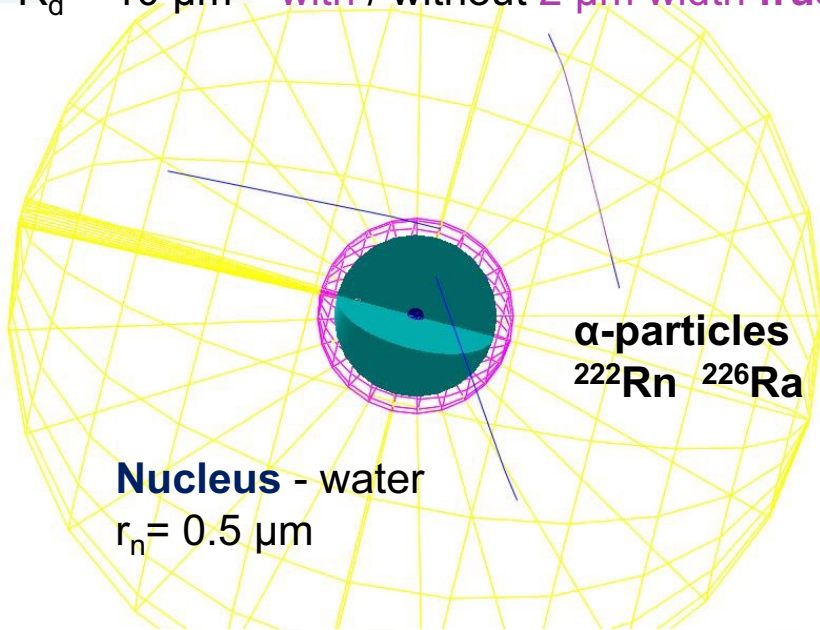
Credits: M. Potarova, Diatoms.org

C. Wetzel, LIST 4

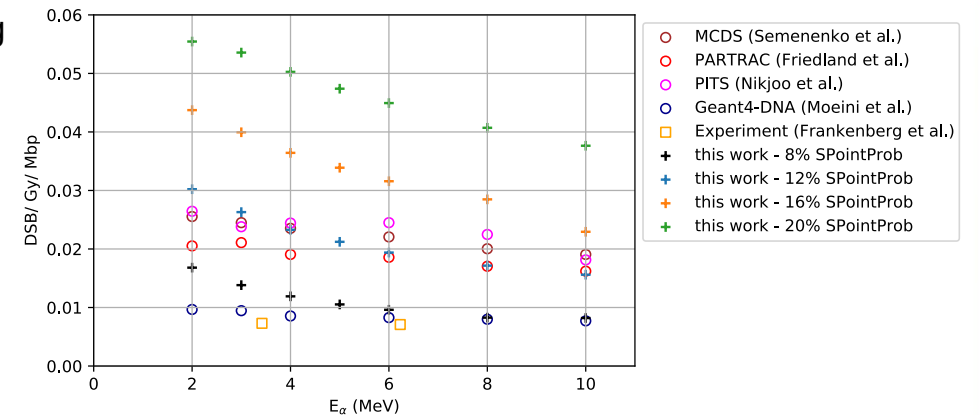
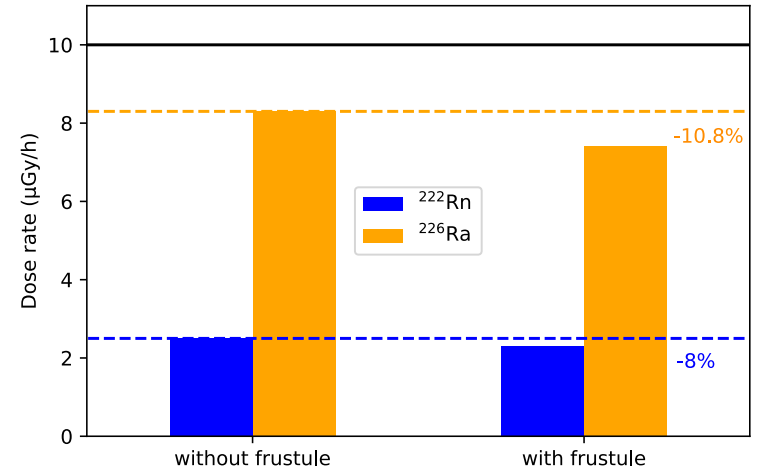
Microdosimetry and DNA damage

Diatom - water

$R_d = 10 \mu\text{m}$ – with / without $2 \mu\text{m}$ width frustule



- 90% liquid H₂O
- 10% sediments
- $d = 1.02 \text{ g / cm}^3$
- ^{222}Rn in H₂O : 1000 Bq / L
 $E_{\alpha, \text{max}} = 5.5 \text{ MeV}$
 $\text{Range}_{\text{water}} = 43.5 \mu\text{m}$
- ^{226}Ra in sediments: 30 Bq / g
 $E_{\alpha, \text{max}} = 4.8 \text{ MeV}$
 $\text{Range}_{\text{water}} = 35 \mu\text{m}$



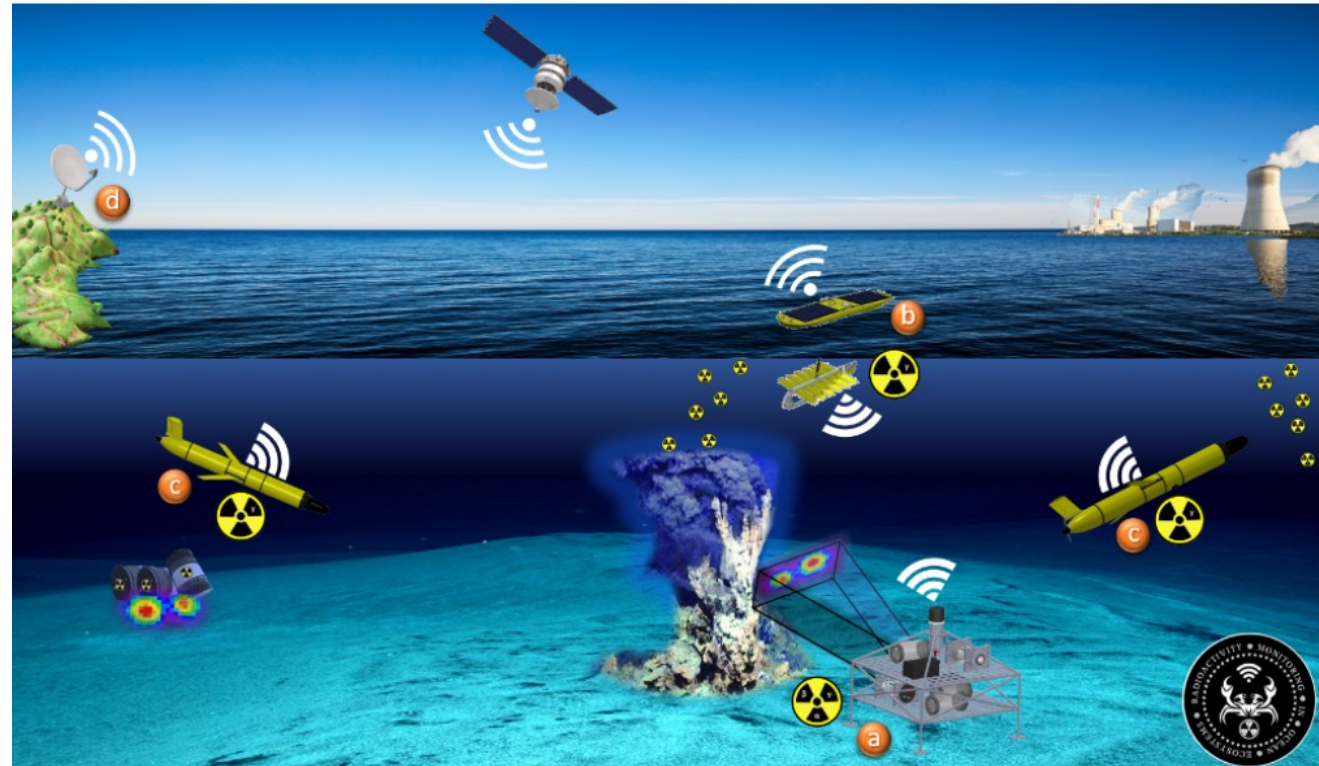
V. A. Semenenko *et al.*, Phys. Med. Biol. **51**, 1693 (2006)
W. Friedland *et al.*, Radiat. Phys. Chem. **72**, 279 (2005)
H. Nikjoo *et al.*, Radiat. Res. **158**, 577 (2001)
H. Moeini *et al.*, Int. J. Radiat. Biol. **96**, 767 (2020)
D. Frankenberg *et al.*, Radiat. Res. **151**, 540 (1999)

Radioactivity monitoring in Ocean Ecosystems

RAMONES



www.ramones-project.eu



Receives funding from European Union under Horizon 2020 FET Proactive Programme via grant agreement No. 101017808

GATE 10 using Python binding for Geant4

- **pip install opengate**

- Install Geant4 + ITK + QT + GATE + data

- **Writing in Python >> Writing with macros**

- Simplified sharing : users-developed modules (e.g. IEC phantoms, detectors, linac etc.)
- Easy access to whole Python ecosystem (AI !)

- **Speed**

- Python is slow ? NO ! Still same G4 engine: **no time penalty**
- G4 multithread

- **Faster development time, better separation**

- Python: user parameters, initialisation, options, I/O etc
- C++: core processing only

- **Advanced features**

- Dynamic trigger: call user function during runtime (time penalty)

See: <https://github.com/OpenGATE/opengate>
Docs <https://opengate-python.readthedocs.io> (wip)

More than 70 tests (example) available

GATE 10 simulation example

```
#!/usr/bin/env python3
# -*- coding: utf-8 -*-

import opengate as gate

paths = gate.get_default_test_paths(__file__, "gate_test008_dose_actor")

# create the simulation
sim = gate.Simulation()

# main options
ui = sim.user_info
ui.g4_verbose = False
ui.g4_verbose_level = 1
ui.visu = False
ui.random_seed = 123456

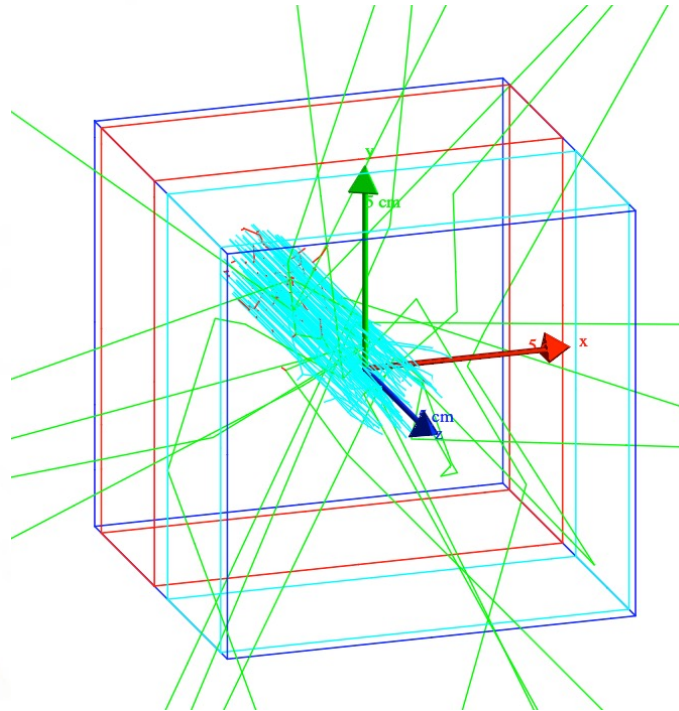
# units
m = gate.g4_units("m")
cm = gate.g4_units("cm")
mm = gate.g4_units("mm")
MeV = gate.g4_units("MeV")
Bq = gate.g4_units("Bq")

# change world size
world = sim.world
world.size = [0.5 * m, 0.5 * m, 0.5 * m]

# waterbox
waterbox = sim.add_volume("Box", "waterbox")
waterbox.size = [10 * cm, 10 * cm, 10 * cm]
waterbox.material = "G4_WATER"
waterbox.color = [0, 0, 1, 1]

# lungbox
lungbox = sim.add_volume("Box", "lungbox")
lungbox.mother = waterbox.name
lungbox.size = [10 * cm, 10 * cm, 4 * cm]
lungbox.translation = [0 * cm, 0 * cm, 2.5 * cm]
lungbox.material = "G4_LUNG_ICRP"
lungbox.color = [0, 1, 1, 1]

# bonebox
bonebox = sim.add_volume("Box", "bonebox")
bonebox.mother = waterbox.name
bonebox.size = [10 * cm, 10 * cm, 4 * cm]
bonebox.translation = [0 * cm, 0 * cm, -2.5 * cm]
bonebox.material = "G4_BONE_CORTICAL_ICRP"
bonebox.color = [1, 0, 0, 1]
```



```
# physics
p = sim.get_physics_user_info()
p.physics_list_name = "QGSP_BERT_EMV"
sim.set_cut("world", "all", 1 * mm)

# default source for tests
source = sim.add_source("Generic", "mysource")
source.energy.mono = 115 * MeV
source.particle = "proton"
source.position.type = "disc"
source.position.radius = 1 * cm
source.position.translation = [0, 0, -80 * mm]
source.direction.type = "momentum"
source.direction.momentum = [0, 0, 1]
source.activity = 5000 * Bq

# add dose actor
dose = sim.add_actor("DoseActor", "dose")
dose.output = paths.output / "test041-edep.mhd"
dose.mother = "waterbox"
dose.size = [10, 10, 50]
mm = gate.g4_units("mm")
ts = [200 * mm, 200 * mm, 200 * mm]
dose.spacing = [x / y for x, y in zip(ts, dose.size)]
print(dose.spacing)
dose.uncertainty = True
dose.gray = True
dose.hit_type = "random"

# add stat actor
s = sim.add_actor("SimulationStatisticsActor", "Stats")
s.track_types_flag = True

# create G4 objects
sim.initialize()

# start simulation
sim.start()

# print results at the end
stat = sim.get_actor("Stats")
print(stat)

dose = sim.get_actor("dose")
print(dose)
```

Information

Web site <http://www.opengatecollaboration.org>

GATE user mailing list <https://listserv.in2p3.fr/cgi-bin/wa?A0=OPENGATE-L>

GATE documentation

To install GATE <https://opengate.readthedocs.io/en/latest/installation.html>

To use GATE <https://opengate.readthedocs.io/en/latest/>

Accessible through Github

Source code <https://github.com/OpenGATE/Gate>

Examples <https://github.com/OpenGATE/GateContrib>

Analysis tools <https://github.com/OpenGATE/gatetools>



Scientific meetings:

- May 2022 <https://indico.in2p3.fr/e/gate2022>
- 25-26 April 2023, in Krakow (Poland), to register: <https://indico.in2p3.fr/e/gate2023>

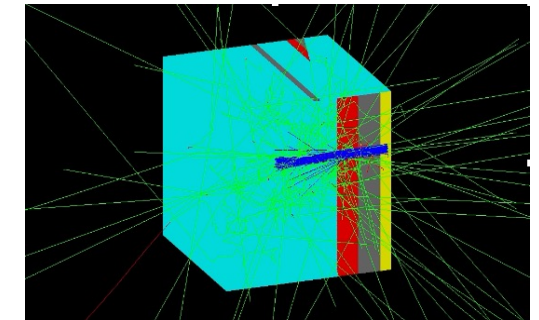
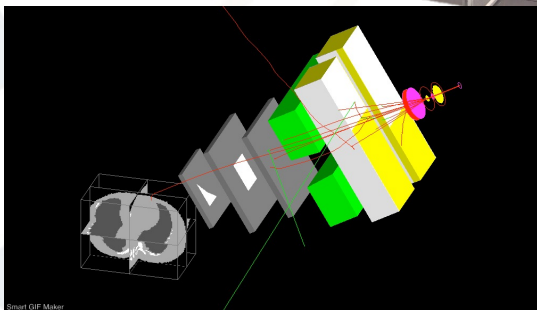
Trainings & Workshops

- 1 workshop @ main conferences : IEEE NSS-MIC, AAPM, MCMA, PTCOG...
- Trainings : 2/year
 - [GATE training \(beginner level\): 22-24/11/23](#)
 - [Python data analysis for GATE simulations: June 2022](#)

GATE training hub for students



- Server dedicated to training
- 100 simultaneous connections
- For on site or remote tutorials
- Shared course materials
- **Service open since 2021**



THANK YOU

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