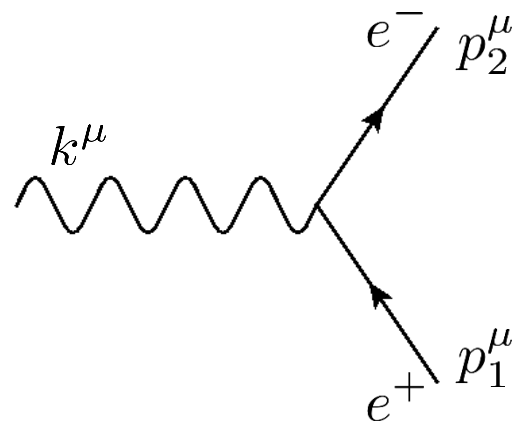


Pair creation on a nucleus in plasma induced by a strong laser field

P. Mati and S. Varró

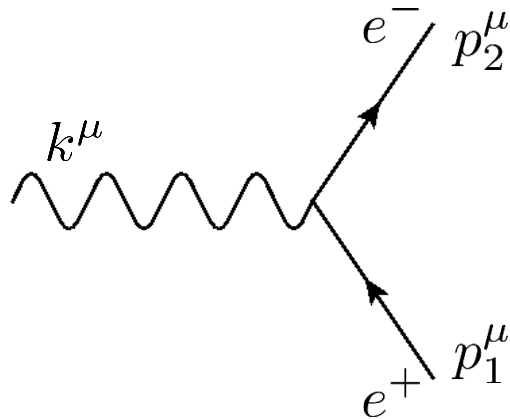


Pair production in QED



$$\gamma \rightarrow e^+ + e^-$$

Pair production in QED



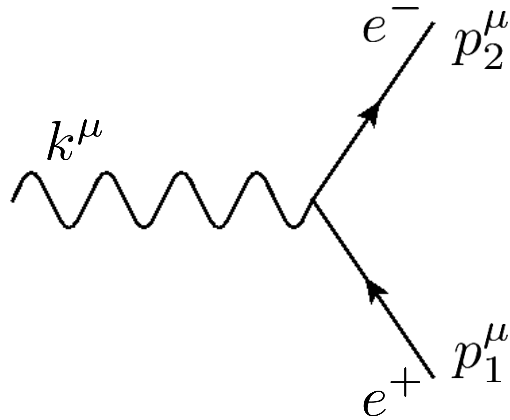
$$\gamma \rightarrow e^+ + e^-$$

$$\hbar = c = 1$$

For the created pairs the four momentum $P_{e^-e^+} = \{2p_0, \mathbf{0}\}$

And the photon $k^\mu = \{k_0, \mathbf{k}\}$ with $k^2 = k_0^2 - \mathbf{k}^2 = 0$

Pair production in QED



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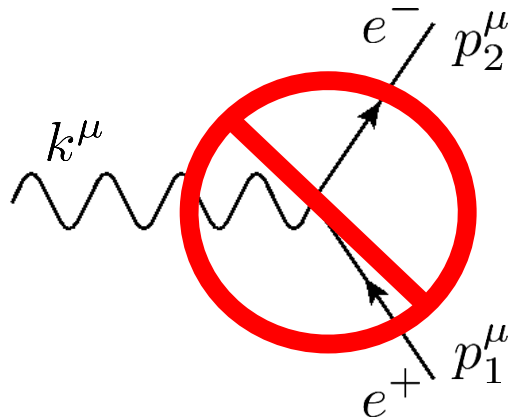
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Due to the energy-momentum conservation $k_0 = 2p_0$ and $\mathbf{k} = \mathbf{0}$

This requirement contradicts with the photon's light-like nature!

Hence this process is forbidden within the framework of QED.

A second order process is the lowest for pair production: **the Breit-Wheeler process**.

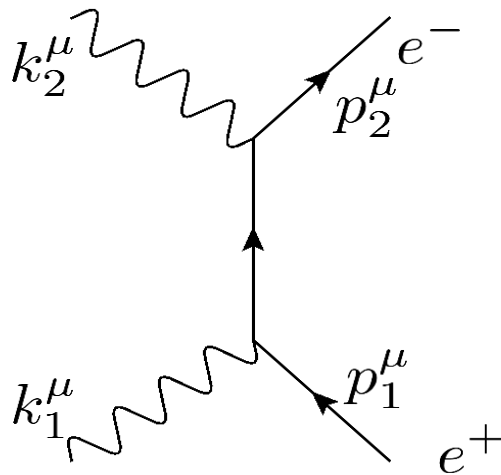
A second order process is the lowest for pair production: **the Breit-Wheeler process**.

G. Breit and John A. Wheeler (15 December 1934). ["Collision of Two Light Quanta"](#)



A second order process is the lowest for pair production: **the Breit-Wheeler process**.

G. Breit and John A. Wheeler (15 December 1934). ["Collision of Two Light Quanta"](#)



$$\gamma + \gamma' \rightarrow e^+ + e^-$$

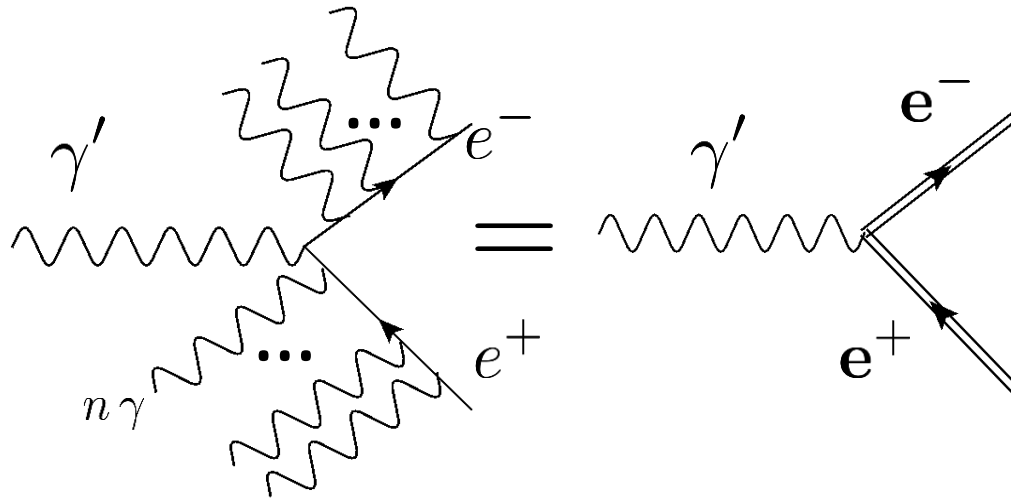
Never experienced

Pair production with background

Laser induced pair production: **multiphoton Breit-Wheeler process**

Pair production with background

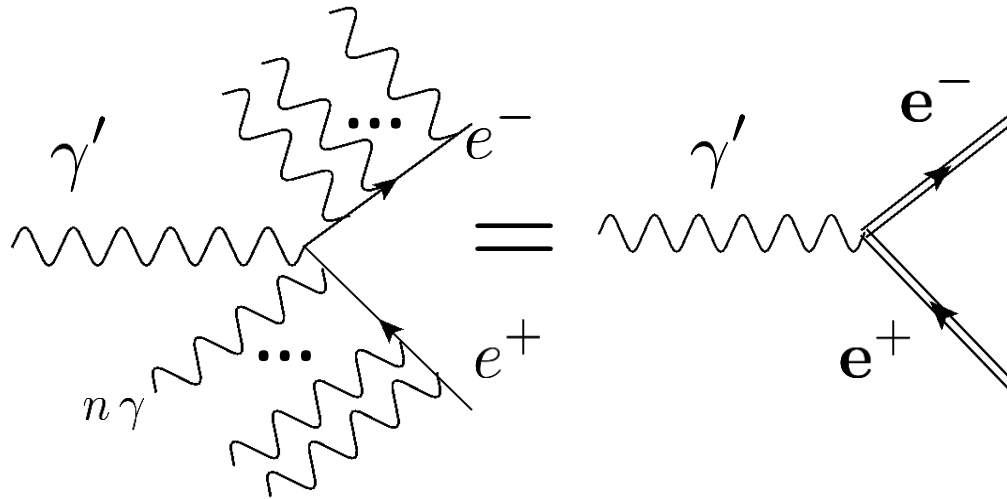
Laser induced pair production: **multiphoton Breit-Wheeler process**



The incident high energy photon splits into an electron-positron pair.

Pair production with background

Laser induced pair production: **multiphoton Breit-Wheeler process**



The incident high energy photon splits into an electron-positron pair.

Theory

H.R. Reiss, *J. Math. Phys.* 3, 59 (1962); A.I. Nikishov, V.I. Ritus, *Sov. Phys. JETP* 19, 529 (1964).

Experiments at SLAC

D.Burke et al., *Phys.Rev. Lett.* 79,1626 (1997); C.Bamber et al., *Phys.Rev.* D60,092004 (1999).

The Dirac equation can be solved exactly in a laser field

$$(i\cancel{\partial} - e\cancel{A} - m) \psi_p(x) = 0$$

where the vector potential has the form $A^\mu = a(\varepsilon_1^\mu \cos(kx) + \varepsilon_2^\mu \sin(kx))$

And the Lorentz gauge condition is applied $k_\mu A^\mu = 0$

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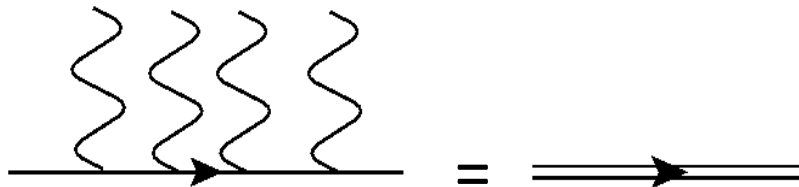
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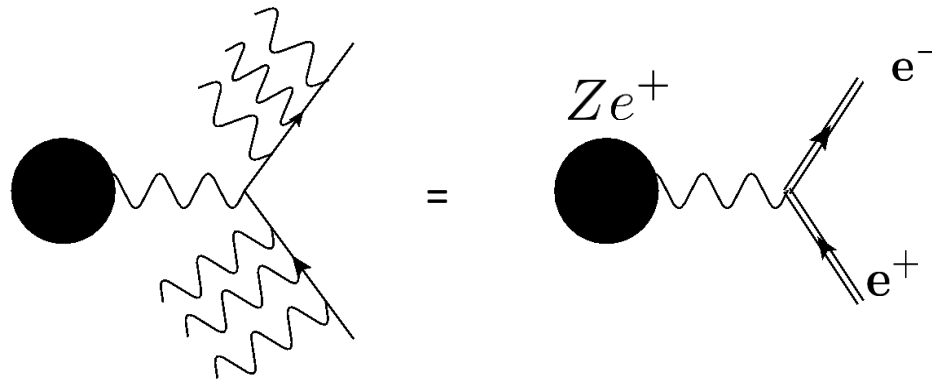
$$\psi_p(x) = \sqrt{\frac{m}{p_0 V}} \left(1 + \frac{e}{2kp} \cancel{k} \cancel{A} \right) u(p) \exp \left(ie \frac{\cos(kx)}{kp} \epsilon_2 p - ie \frac{\sin(kx)}{kp} \epsilon_1 p - iqx \right)$$

“Laser dressing” of an electron

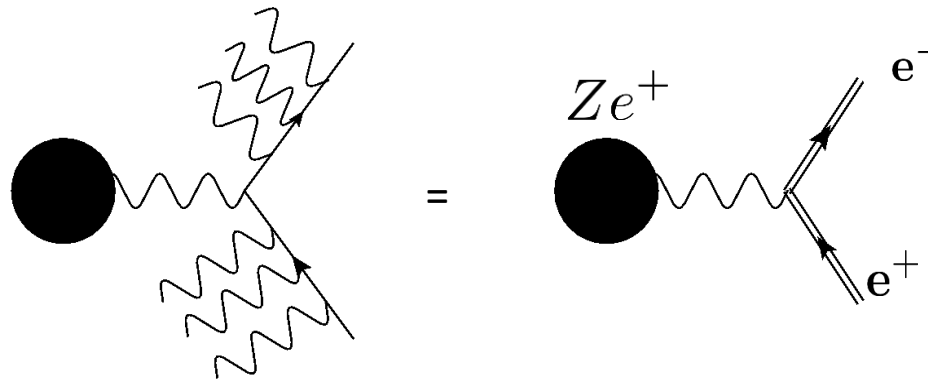


D.M. Volkov, [Z. Physik94, 250 \(1935\)](#).

However, one could replace the incident photon by a scattering potential



However, one could replace the incident photon by a scattering potential



E.g. it can be the **Coulomb potential** of a point charge (nucleus). That is, this process describes the interaction of laser with a nucleus resulting in dressed electron-positron pairs.

General description: J Bergou and S Varró [J. Phys. A: Math. Gen. 13 \(1980\) 2823-2837](#).

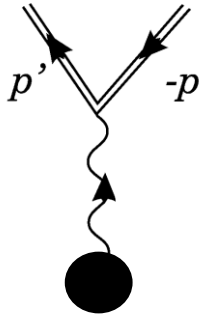
Application with linearly polarized light:

J. Z. Kamiński, K. Krajewska, and F. Ehlotzky, [PHYSICAL REVIEW A 74, 033402 \(2006\)](#)

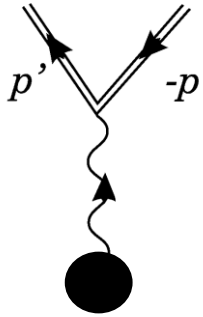
P. Panek, P. Siecka J. Z. Kamiński, K. Krajewska, and F. Ehlotzky, [PHYSICAL REVIEW A 73, 053409 \(2006\)](#)

Pair creation on a nucleus in plasma

$$S_{fi} = -ie \int d^4x \bar{\psi}'_p(x) A(x) \psi_{-p}(x)$$



Pair creation on a nucleus in plasma



$$S_{fi} = -ie \int d^4x \bar{\psi}'_p(x) A(x) \psi_{-p}(x)$$

$$A_\mu = \left(\frac{Ze}{|\mathbf{x}|} e^{-|\mathbf{x}|/\lambda_D}, \mathbf{0} \right)$$

$$\psi_{p'}(x) = \sqrt{\frac{m}{p'_0 V}} \bar{u}(p) \left(1 + \frac{e}{2kp'} \not{k} A \right) \exp \left(-ie \frac{\cos(kx)}{kp'} \epsilon_2 p' + ie \frac{\sin(kx)}{kp'} \epsilon_1 p' + iq'x \right)$$

$$\psi_{-p}(x) = \sqrt{\frac{m}{p_0 V}} \left(1 - \frac{e}{2kp} \not{k} A \right) v(p) \exp \left(ie \frac{\cos(kx)}{kp} \epsilon_2 p - ie \frac{\sin(kx)}{kp} \epsilon_1 p + iqx \right)$$

$$q^\mu = p^\mu + e^2 a^2 \frac{k^\mu}{2k \cdot p}$$

Pair creation on a nucleus in plasma

$$S_{fi} = -ie \frac{m}{\sqrt{p_0 p'_0} V} \int d^4x \bar{u}(p') \left(1 + \frac{e}{2p'k} \not{A} \not{k} \right) \gamma^0 \left(\frac{Ze}{|\mathbf{x}|} e^{-|\mathbf{x}|/\lambda_D} \right) \left(1 - \frac{e}{2pk} \not{k} \not{A} \right) v(p) \\ \times e^{iea \sin(kx) \left(\frac{\epsilon_1 p}{kp} - \frac{\epsilon_1 p'}{kp'} \right) + iea \cos(kx) \left(\frac{\epsilon_1 p'}{kp'} - \frac{\epsilon_2 p}{kp} \right)} e^{i(q+q')}$$

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$$\times e^{iea \sin(kx) \left(\frac{\epsilon_{1p}}{kp} - \frac{\epsilon_{1p'}}{kp'} \right) + iea \cos(kx) \left(\frac{\epsilon_{1p'}}{kp'} - \frac{\epsilon_{2p}}{kp} \right)} e^{i(q+q')}$$

$$M = \left(1 + \frac{e}{2p'k} \not{A} \not{k} \right) \gamma^0 \left(1 - \frac{e}{2pk} \not{k} \not{A} \right)$$

$$e^{iea \sin(kx) \left(\frac{\epsilon_{1p}}{kp} - \frac{\epsilon_{1p'}}{kp'} \right) + iea \cos(kx) \left(\frac{\epsilon_{1p'}}{kp'} - \frac{\epsilon_{2p}}{kp} \right)} e^{i(q+q')}$$

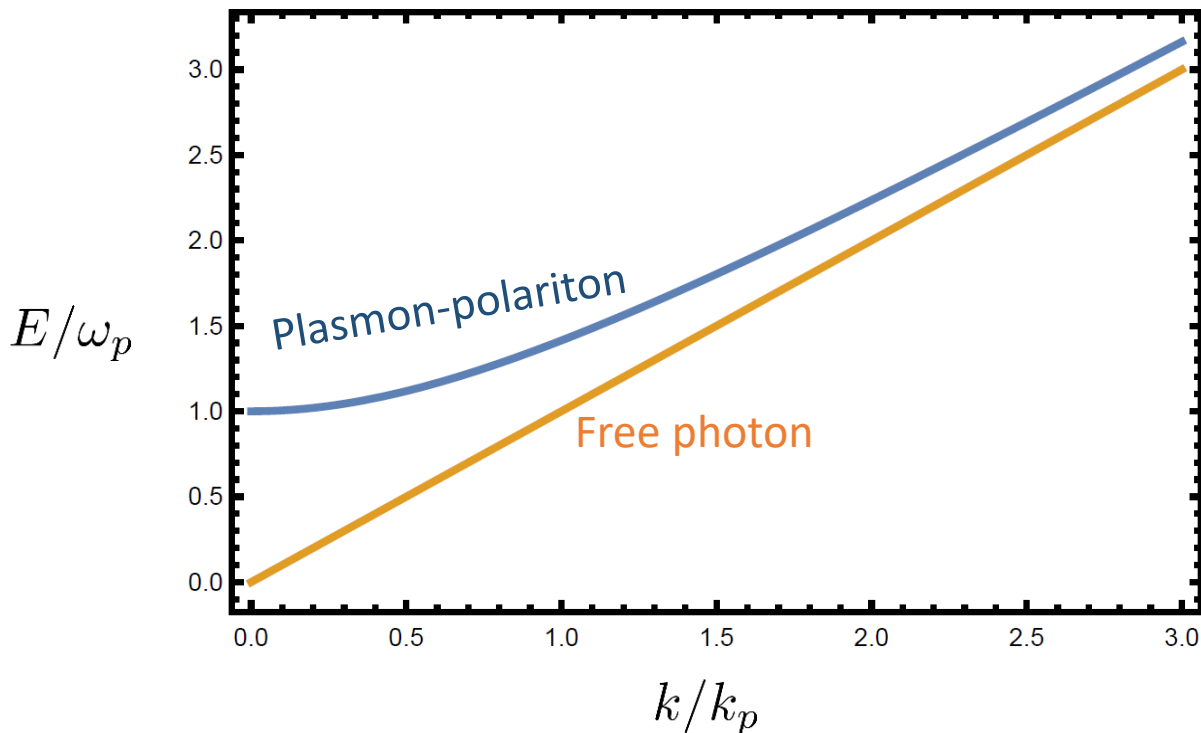
Pair creation on a nucleus in plasma

The effect of the plasma

For the laser we take into account the effect of the plasma: it alters the dispersion relations of the propagating EM waves

$$E = \sqrt{\omega^2 + \omega_p^2}$$

Hence $k^2 \neq 0$ but $k^2 = k_0^2(1 - n_m^2) = \omega_p^2 = k_p^2$ where the refractive index $n_m < 1$



Pair creation on a nucleus in plasma

M matrix

$$M = \gamma^0 + ea \cos \phi \left(\frac{\not{\epsilon}_1 \not{k} \gamma^0}{2p'k} - \frac{\gamma^0 \not{k} \not{\epsilon}_1}{2pk} \right) + ea \sin \phi \left(\frac{\not{\epsilon}_2 \not{k} \gamma^0}{2p'k} - \frac{\gamma^0 \not{k} \not{\epsilon}_2}{2pk} \right) \\ + \frac{e^2 a^2}{4(p'k)(pk)} (k^2 \gamma^0 - 2\not{k}k^0)$$

Pair creation on a nucleus in plasma

M matrix

$$M = \gamma^0 + ea \cos \phi \left(\frac{\not{\epsilon}_1 \not{k} \gamma^0}{2p'k} - \frac{\gamma^0 \not{k} \not{\epsilon}_1}{2pk} \right) + ea \sin \phi \left(\frac{\not{\epsilon}_2 \not{k} \gamma^0}{2p'k} - \frac{\gamma^0 \not{k} \not{\epsilon}_2}{2pk} \right) \\ \frac{e^2 a^2}{4(p'k)(pk)} (k^2 \gamma^0 - 2\not{k}k^0)$$

Exponential

$$e^{iea \sin(kx) \left(\frac{\epsilon_1 p}{kp} - \frac{\epsilon_1 p'}{kp'} \right) + iea \cos(kx) \left(\frac{\epsilon_1 p'}{kp'} - \frac{\epsilon_2 p}{kp} \right)} e^{i(q+q')}$$



$$P_\mu = \frac{q_\mu}{kp} - \frac{q'_\mu}{kp'}$$

$$z = ea \sqrt{\epsilon_1 P + \epsilon_2 P}$$

$$e^{z \left(\frac{ea P \epsilon_1}{z} \sin \phi - \frac{ea P \epsilon_2}{z} \cos \phi \right)} = e^{z \sin(\phi - \phi_0)}$$

Pair creation on a nucleus in plasma

$$e^{i \sin \phi - \phi_0} = \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} B_n(z) e^{in\phi}$$

$$\cos \phi e^{i \sin \phi - \phi_0} = \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} C_n(z) e^{in\phi}$$

Jacobi-Anger expansion

$$\sin \phi e^{i \sin \phi - \phi_0} = \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} D_n(z) e^{in\phi}$$

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$$\sin \phi e^{i \sin \phi - \phi_0} = \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} D_n(z) e^{in\phi}$$

$$B_n(z) = J_n(z) e^{-in\phi_0}$$

$$C_n(z) = 1/2 \left(J_{n-1}(z) e^{-i(n-1)\phi_0} + J_{n+1}(z) e^{-i(n+1)\phi_0} \right)$$

$$D_n(z) = 1/2i \left(J_{n-1}(z) e^{-i(n-1)\phi_0} - J_{n+1}(z) e^{-i(n+1)\phi_0} \right)$$

Pair creation on a nucleus in plasma

$$M_n = C_n ea \left(\frac{\not{\epsilon}_1 \not{k} \gamma^0}{2p'k} - \frac{\gamma^0 \not{k} \not{\epsilon}_1}{2pk} \right) + D_n ea \left(\frac{\not{\epsilon}_2 \not{k} \gamma^0}{2p'k} - \frac{\gamma^0 \not{k} \not{\epsilon}_2}{2pk} \right) \\ B_n \left(\gamma^0 + \frac{e^2 a^2}{4(p'k)(pk)} (k^2 \gamma^0 - 2\not{k}k^0) \right)$$

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$$S_{fi} = ie^2 Z \frac{m}{\sqrt{p_0 p'_0} V} \sum_n \int d^4 x e^{i(q+q'+nk)x} \bar{u}(p') M_n v(p) \frac{e^{-|\mathbf{x}|/\lambda_D}}{|\mathbf{x}|}$$

Pair creation on a nucleus in plasma

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$$\int d^4 x e^{i(q+q'+nk)x} \frac{e^{-|\mathbf{x}|/\lambda_D}}{|\mathbf{x}|} = \frac{4\pi}{(\mathbf{q} + \mathbf{q}' + n\mathbf{k})^2 + 1/\lambda_D^2} \delta(q_0 + q'_0 + nk_0)$$

Only energy conserves

Pair creation on a nucleus in plasma

$$S_{fi} = ie^2 Z \frac{m}{\sqrt{p_0 p'_0} V} \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} \frac{8\pi^2}{m_n^2 + 1/\lambda_D^2} \delta(q_0 + q'_0 + nk_0) \bar{u}(p') M_n v(p)$$

Pair creation on a nucleus in plasma

$$S_{fi} = ie^2 Z \frac{m}{\sqrt{p_0 p'_0} V} \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} \frac{8\pi^2}{m_n^2 + 1/\lambda_D^2} \delta(q_0 + q'_0 + nk_0) \bar{u}(p') M_n v(p)$$

$$d\sigma = \frac{d^3 q}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{d^3 q'}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{m^2}{p_0 p'_0} \frac{4}{(2\pi)^2} |S_{fi}|^2$$

$$d\sigma = \frac{d^3 q}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{d^3 q'}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{m^2}{p_0 p'_0} \frac{4}{(2\pi)^2} Z^2 e^4 \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{(m_n^2 + 1/\lambda_D^2)^2} \delta(q_0 + q'_0 + nk_0) |\bar{u}(p') M_n v(p)|^2$$

Pair creation on a nucleus in plasma

$$S_{fi} = ie^2 Z \frac{m}{\sqrt{p_0 p'_0} V} \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} \frac{8\pi^2}{m_n^2 + 1/\lambda_D^2} \delta(q_0 + q'_0 + nk_0) \bar{u}(p') M_n v(p)$$

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Summing over spin states

$$\overline{|M_{fi,n}|^2} = \sum_{s,s'} |\bar{u}(p') M_n v(p)|^2 = \text{Tr} \left[\frac{\not{p}' + m}{2m} M_n \frac{\not{p} - m}{2m} \gamma_0 M_n^\dagger \gamma_0 \right]$$

Pair creation on a nucleus in plasma

$$\overline{|M_{fi,n}|^2} = \frac{1}{8m^2} \text{Tr} \left\{ (\not{p} + m) \left[B_n \left(\gamma^0 + \frac{e^2 a^2}{4(p'k)(pk)} (k^2 \gamma^0 - 2\not{k}k^0) \right) + ea \left(\frac{\not{E}\not{k}\gamma^0}{2kp'} - \frac{\gamma^0\not{k}\not{E}}{2kp} \right) \right] \right. \\ \left. (\not{p} - m) \left[B_n^* \left(\gamma^0 + \frac{e^2 a^2}{4(p'k)(pk)} (k^2 \gamma^0 - 2\not{k}k^0) \right) + ea \left(\frac{\gamma^0\not{k}\not{E}^*}{2kp'} - \frac{\not{E}^*\not{k}\gamma^0}{2kp} \right) \right] \right\}$$

$$E = C_n \not{\epsilon}_1 + D_n \not{\epsilon}_2$$

$$E^* = \gamma^0 E^\dagger \gamma^0 = C_n^* \not{\epsilon}_1 + D_n^* \not{\epsilon}_2$$

Evaluate the trace.

Pair creation on a nucleus in plasma

$$\overline{|M_{fi,n}|^2} =$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 & -4 B_1 B_2 m^2 + B_1 B_2 (-4 P_1 P_2 + 8 P_1[0] P_2[0]) + EA \left(-\frac{B_2 (4 KP_2 P_1 ES_1 - 4 KP_1 P_2 ES_1 + 8 k_0 P_2 ES_1 P_1[0])}{2 KP_2} - \right. \\
 & \left. \frac{B_1 (4 KP_2 P_1 ES_2 - 4 KP_1 P_2 ES_2 + 8 k_0 P_2 ES_2 P_1[0])}{2 KP_2} + \frac{B_2 (-4 KP_2 P_1 ES_1 + 4 KP_1 P_2 ES_1 + 8 k_0 P_1 ES_1 P_2[0])}{2 KP_1} + \frac{B_1 (-4 KP_2 P_1 ES_2 + 4 KP_1 P_2 ES_2 + 8 k_0 P_1 ES_2 P_2[0])}{2 KP_1} \right) + \\
 & EA^3 \left(-\frac{B_2 k^2 (4 KP_2 P_1 ES_1 - 4 KP_1 P_2 ES_1 + 8 k_0 P_2 ES_1 P_1[0])}{8 KP_1 KP_2^2} - \frac{B_1 k^2 (4 KP_2 P_1 ES_2 - 4 KP_1 P_2 ES_2 + 8 k_0 P_2 ES_2 P_1[0])}{8 KP_1 KP_2^2} + \right. \\
 & \left. \frac{B_2 k_0 (8 k_0 KP_2 P_1 ES_1 + 4 k^2 P_2 ES_1 P_1[0] - 4 k^2 P_1 ES_1 P_2[0])}{4 KP_1 KP_2^2} - \frac{B_2 k_0 (8 k_0 KP_1 P_2 ES_1 - 4 k^2 P_2 ES_1 P_1[0] + 4 k^2 P_1 ES_1 P_2[0])}{4 KP_1^2 KP_2} + \right. \\
 & \left. \frac{B_2 k^2 (-4 KP_2 P_1 ES_1 + 4 KP_1 P_2 ES_1 + 8 k_0 P_1 ES_1 P_2[0])}{8 KP_1^2 KP_2} + \frac{B_1 k_0 (8 k_0 KP_2 P_1 ES_2 + 4 k^2 P_2 ES_2 P_1[0] - 4 k^2 P_1 ES_2 P_2[0])}{4 KP_1 KP_2^2} - \right. \\
 & \left. \frac{B_1 k_0 (8 k_0 KP_1 P_2 ES_2 - 4 k^2 P_2 ES_2 P_1[0] + 4 k^2 P_1 ES_2 P_2[0])}{4 KP_1^2 KP_2} + \frac{B_1 k^2 (-4 KP_2 P_1 ES_2 + 4 KP_1 P_2 ES_2 + 8 k_0 P_1 ES_2 P_2[0])}{8 KP_1^2 KP_2} \right) + \\
 & EA^4 \left(-\frac{B_1 B_2 k^4 m^2}{4 KP_1^2 KP_2^2} + \frac{B_1 B_2 k_0^2 (8 KP_1 KP_2 - 4 k^2 P_1 P_2)}{4 KP_1^2 KP_2^2} - \frac{B_1 B_2 k^2 k_0 (-4 k_0 P_1 P_2 + 4 KP_2 P_1[0] + 4 KP_1 P_2[0])}{4 KP_1^2 KP_2^2} + \frac{B_1 B_2 k^4 (-4 P_1 P_2 + 8 P_1[0] P_2[0])}{16 KP_1^2 KP_2^2} \right) + \\
 & EA^2 \left(-\frac{ES_1 ES_2 k^2 m^2}{KP_1^2} - \frac{ES_1 ES_2 k^2 m^2}{KP_2^2} - \frac{2 B_1 B_2 k^2 m^2}{KP_1 KP_2} + \frac{4 B_1 B_2 k_0^2 m^2}{KP_1 KP_2} + \frac{(-4 ES_1 ES_2 k^2 + 8 ES_1 ES_2 k_0^2) m^2}{2 KP_1 KP_2} - \frac{B_1 B_2 k_0 (-4 k_0 P_1 P_2 + 4 KP_2 P_1[0] + 4 KP_1 P_2[0])}{KP_1 KP_2} + \right. \\
 & \left. \frac{B_1 B_2 k^2 (-4 P_1 P_2 + 8 P_1[0] P_2[0])}{2 KP_1 KP_2} - \frac{1}{2 KP_1 KP_2} (-8 ES_1 ES_2 KP_1 KP_2 + 4 ES_1 ES_2 k^2 P_1 P_2 - 8 ES_1 ES_2 k_0^2 P_1 P_2 - 4 k^2 P_1 ES_2 P_2 ES_1 + \right. \\
 & \left. 8 k_0^2 P_1 ES_2 P_2 ES_1 - 4 k^2 P_1 ES_1 P_2 ES_2 + 8 k_0^2 P_1 ES_1 P_2 ES_2 + 8 ES_1 ES_2 k_0 KP_2 P_1[0] + 8 ES_1 ES_2 k_0 KP_1 P_2[0] - 8 ES_1 ES_2 k^2 P_1[0] P_2[0]) + \right. \\
 & \left. \frac{8 ES_1 ES_2 KP_1 KP_2 - 4 ES_1 ES_2 k^2 P_1 P_2 + 4 k^2 P_1 ES_2 P_2 ES_1 + 4 k^2 P_1 ES_1 P_2 ES_2 - 16 ES_1 ES_2 k_0 KP_2 P_1[0] + 8 ES_1 ES_2 k^2 P_1[0] P_2[0]}{4 KP_2^2} + \right. \\
 & \left. \frac{8 ES_1 ES_2 KP_1 KP_2 - 4 ES_1 ES_2 k^2 P_1 P_2 + 4 k^2 P_1 ES_2 P_2 ES_1 + 4 k^2 P_1 ES_1 P_2 ES_2 - 16 ES_1 ES_2 k_0 KP_1 P_2[0] + 8 ES_1 ES_2 k^2 P_1[0] P_2[0]}{4 KP_1^2} \right)
 \end{aligned}$$

Pair creation on a nucleus in plasma

$$\overline{|M_{fi,n}|^2} =$$

$$\begin{aligned} & \frac{2 B_1 B_2 E A^4 k_0^2}{K P_1 K P_2} - 4 B_1 B_2 m^2 + E A^3 \left(\frac{2 B_2 k_0^2 P_1 E S_1}{K P_1 K P_2} + \frac{2 B_1 k_0^2 P_1 E S_2}{K P_1 K P_2} - \frac{2 B_2 k_0^2 P_2 E S_1}{K P_1 K P_2} - \frac{2 B_1 k_0^2 P_2 E S_2}{K P_1 K P_2} \right) + \\ & B_1 B_2 (-4 P_1 P_2 + 8 P_1[0] P_2[0]) + E A^2 \left(\frac{4 B_1 B_2 k_0^2 m^2}{K P_1 K P_2} + \frac{4 E S_1 E S_2 k_0^2 m^2}{K P_1 K P_2} + \frac{8 E S_1 E S_2 K P_1 K P_2 - 16 E S_1 E S_2 k_0 K P_2 P_1[0]}{4 K P_2^2} - \right. \\ & \left. \frac{B_1 B_2 k_0 (-4 k_0 P_1 P_2 + 4 K P_2 P_1[0] + 4 K P_1 P_2[0])}{K P_1 K P_2} + \frac{8 E S_1 E S_2 K P_1 K P_2 - 16 E S_1 E S_2 k_0 K P_1 P_2[0]}{4 K P_1^2} - \right. \\ & \left. \frac{-8 E S_1 E S_2 K P_1 K P_2 - 8 E S_1 E S_2 k_0^2 P_1 P_2 + 8 k_0^2 P_1 E S_2 P_2 E S_1 + 8 k_0^2 P_1 E S_1 P_2 E S_2 + 8 E S_1 E S_2 k_0 K P_2 P_1[0] + 8 E S_1 E S_2 k_0 K P_1 P_2[0]}{2 K P_1 K P_2} \right) + \\ & E A \left(- \frac{B_2 (4 K P_2 P_1 E S_1 - 4 K P_1 P_2 E S_1 + 8 k_0 P_2 E S_1 P_1[0])}{2 K P_2} - \frac{B_1 (4 K P_2 P_1 E S_2 - 4 K P_1 P_2 E S_2 + 8 k_0 P_2 E S_2 P_1[0])}{2 K P_2} + \right. \\ & \left. \frac{B_2 (-4 K P_2 P_1 E S_1 + 4 K P_1 P_2 E S_1 + 8 k_0 P_1 E S_1 P_2[0])}{2 K P_1} + \frac{B_1 (-4 K P_2 P_1 E S_2 + 4 K P_1 P_2 E S_2 + 8 k_0 P_1 E S_2 P_2[0])}{2 K P_1} \right) \end{aligned}$$

For $k^2 = 0$

Pair creation on a nucleus in plasma

$$\sigma = \int \int \frac{d^3q}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{d^3q'}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{m^2}{p_0 p'_0} \frac{4}{(2\pi)^2} Z^2 e^4 \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{(m_n^2 + 1/\lambda_D^2)^2} \delta(q_0 + q'_0 + nk_0) |\bar{u}(p') M_n v(p)|^2$$

The differential cross section

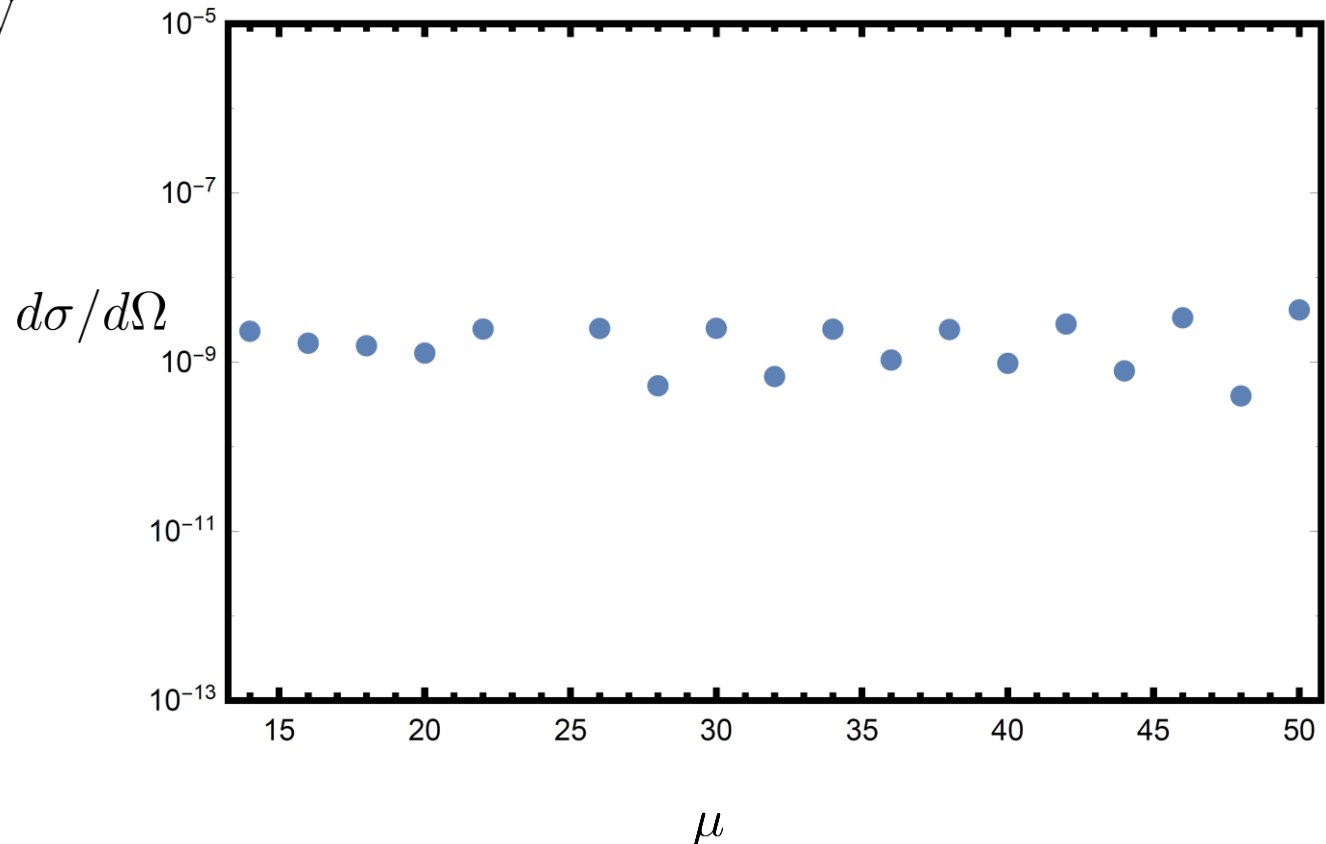
$$m_{e^+,e^-} = 0.511 \text{ MeV}$$

$$k^0 = 1.56 \text{ eV}$$

$$k_p = 1 \text{ eV}$$

$$\mu = \frac{ea}{m} = 1 - 50$$

$$\lambda_D = 10^{-10} \text{ m}$$



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