

# Neutrino Physics Opportunities with Pion and Kaon Decay-at-Rest Neutrino Source

Vishvas Pandey (विश्वास पाण्डेय)

Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory

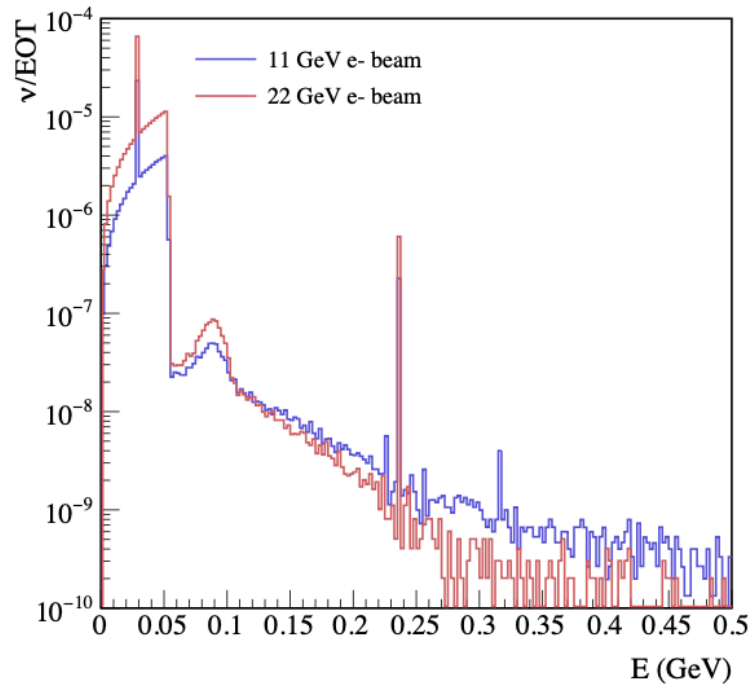
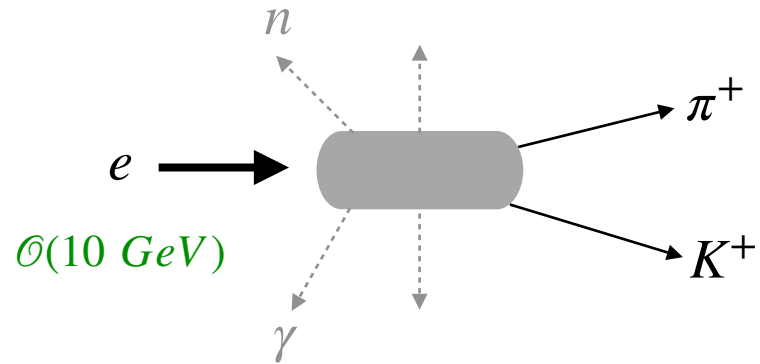
Secondary Beams at Jefferson Lab Workshop (BDX & Beyond), JLab, September 4 - 5, 2025



U.S. DEPARTMENT  
of **ENERGY**

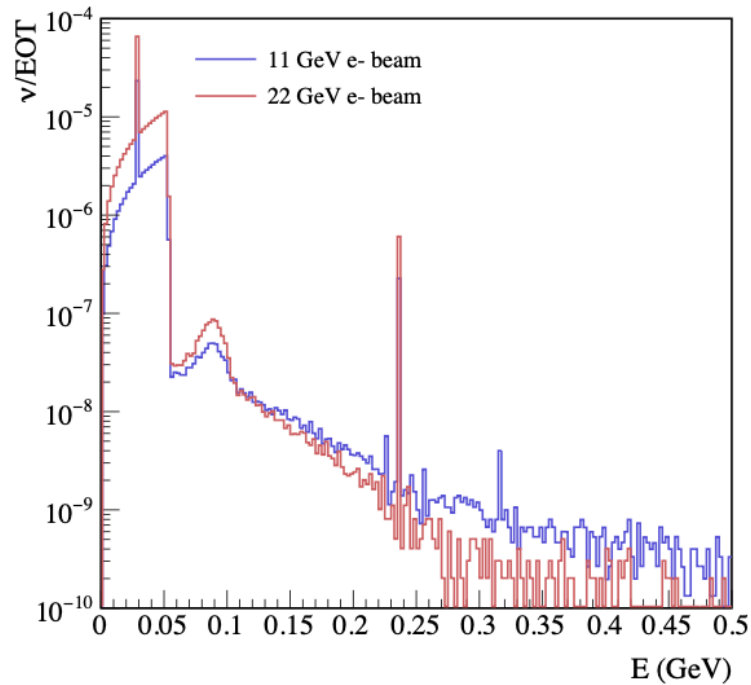
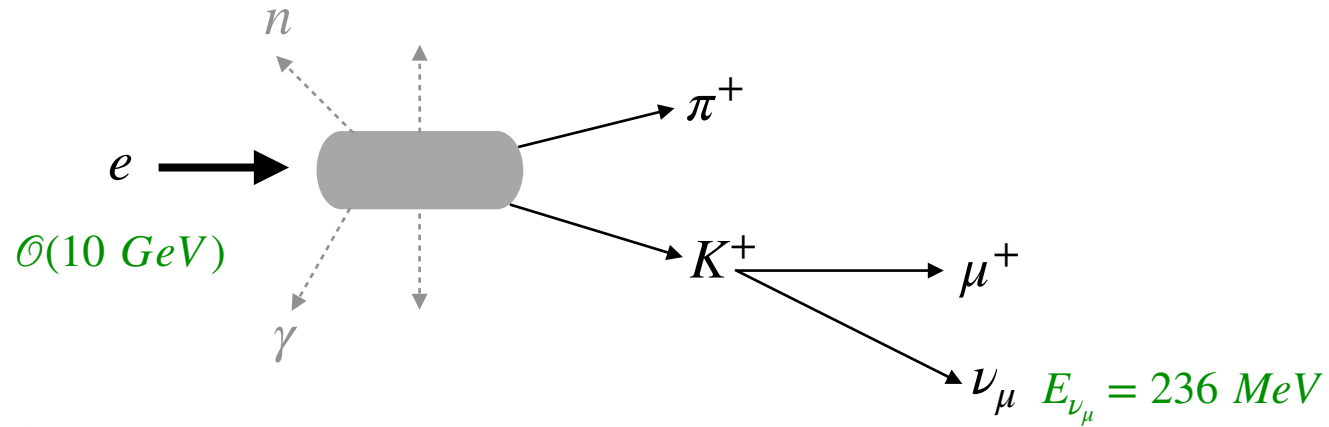
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# Neutrinos at BDX Facility at JLab



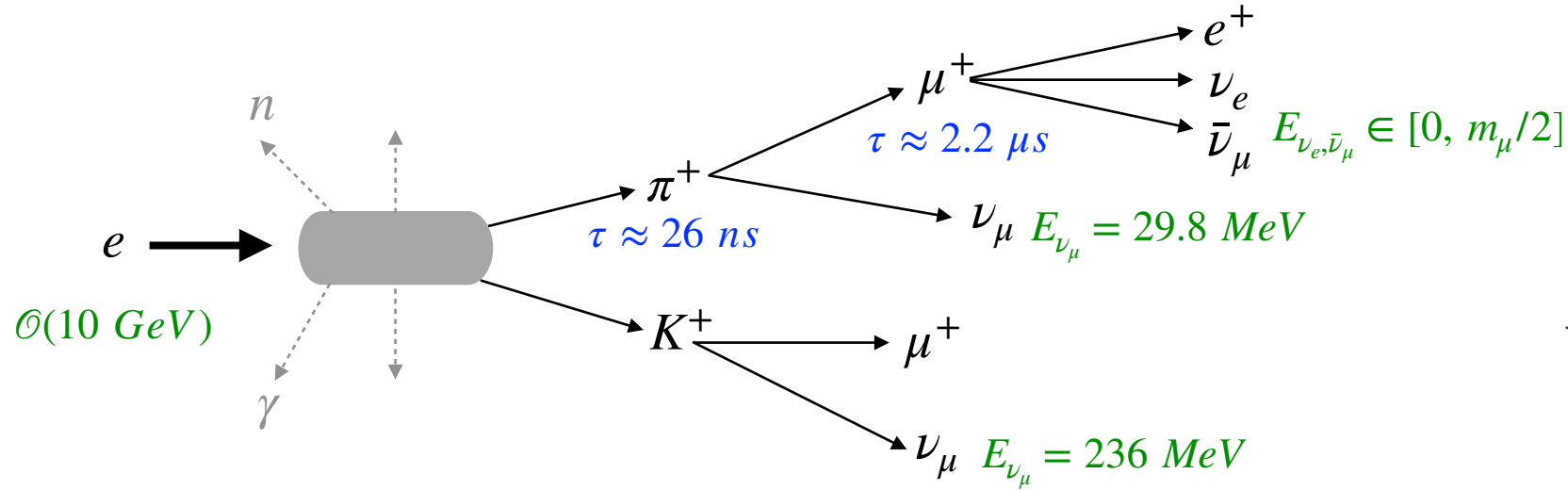
*M. Battaglieri et al., Instruments 8, 1 (2024)*

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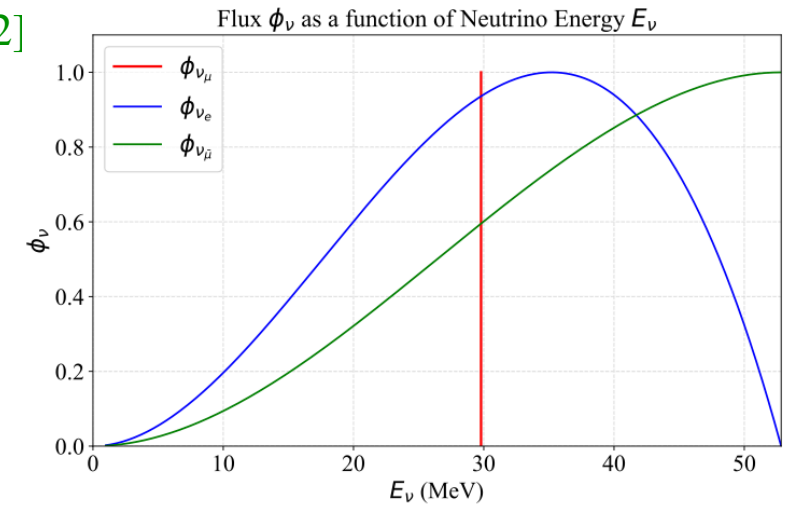


*M. Battaglieri et al., Instruments 8, 1 (2024)*

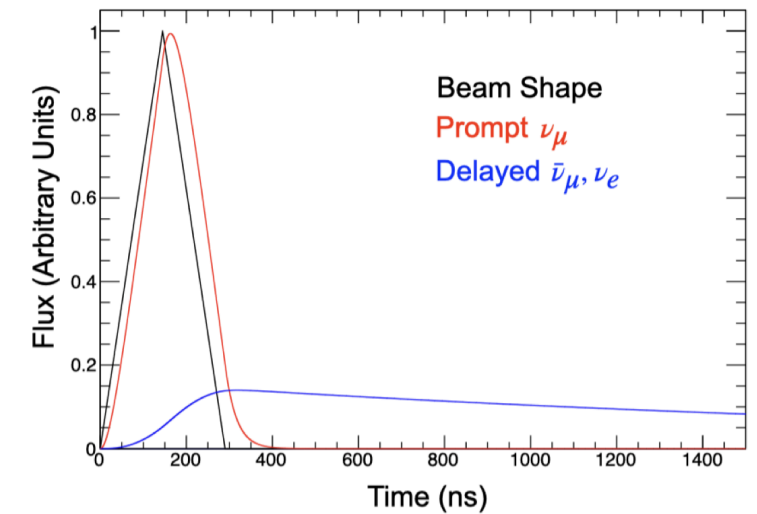
# Neutrinos at BDX Facility at JLab



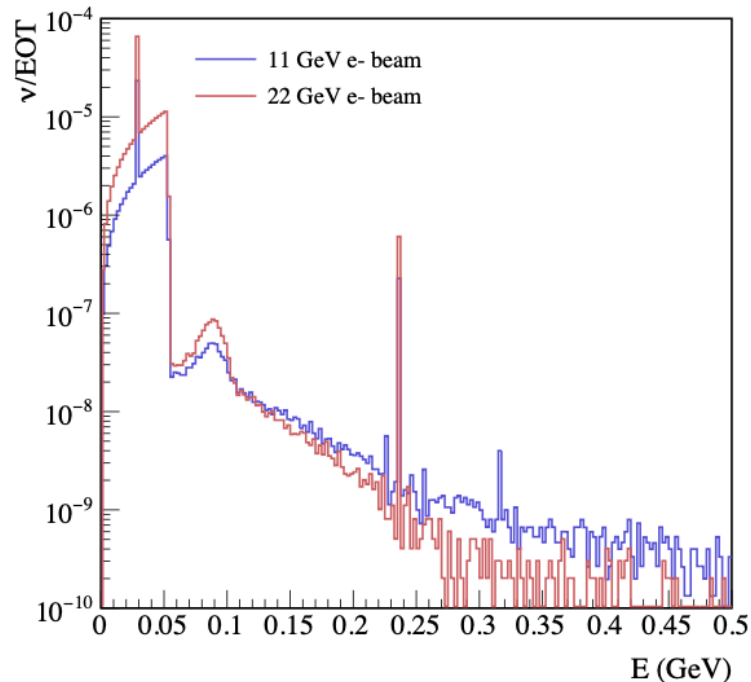
## piDAR Neutrinos: Energy Profile



## piDAR Neutrinos: Timing Profile

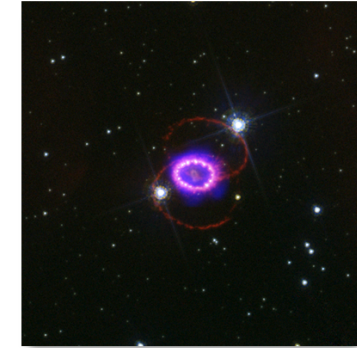
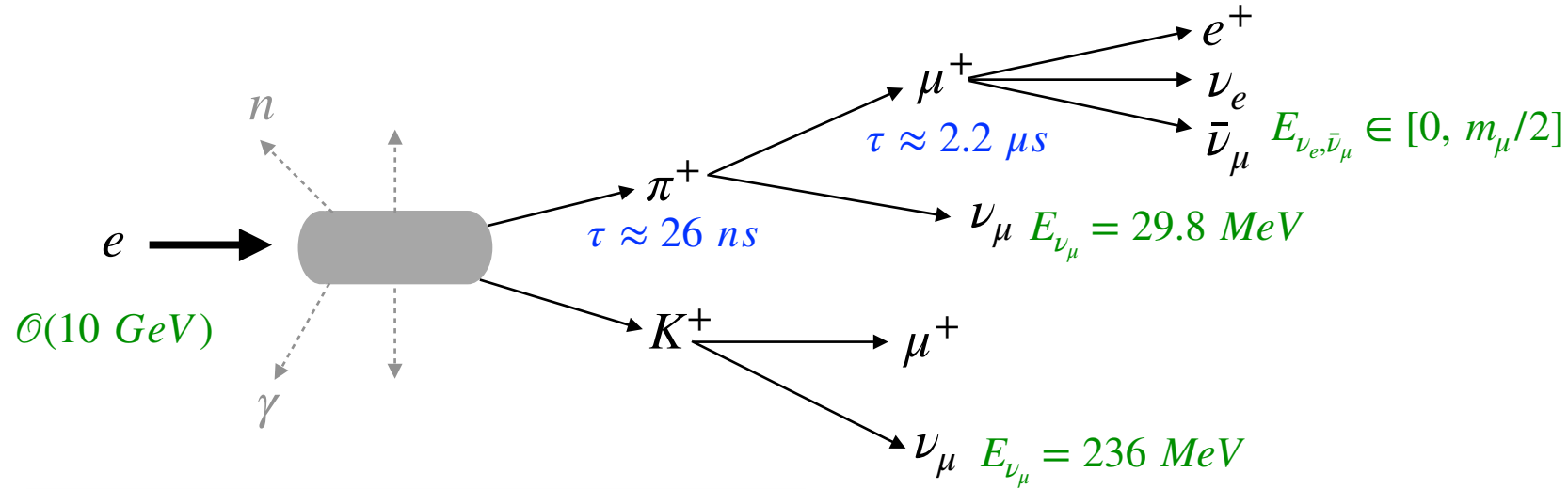


- Prompt  $\nu_\mu$  can be separated from delayed  $\nu_e, \bar{\nu}_\mu$  using timing information.

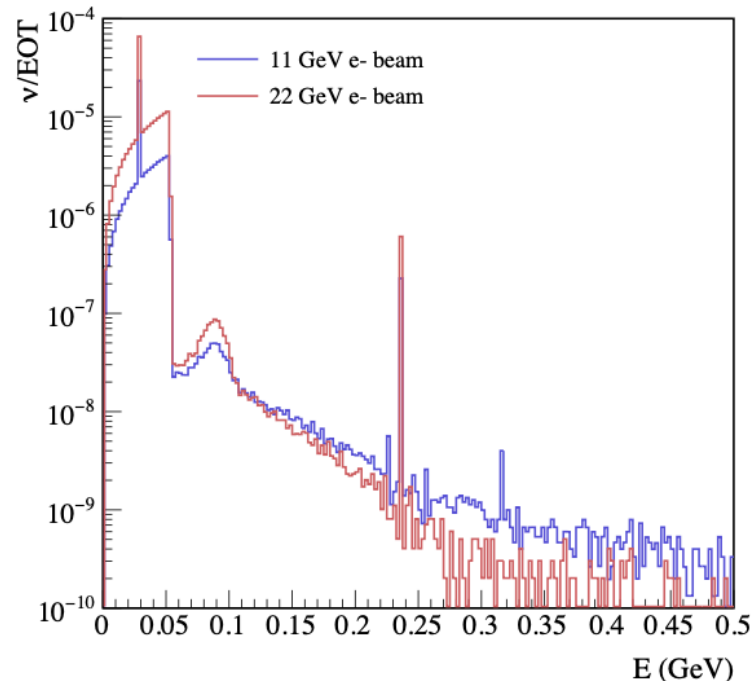


*M. Battaglieri et al., Instruments 8, 1 (2024)*

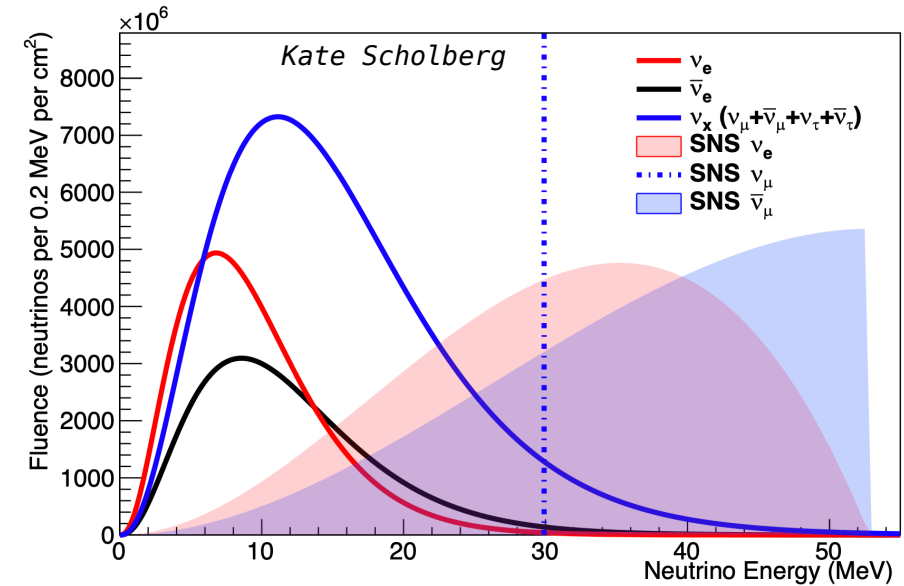
# Neutrinos at BDX Facility at JLab



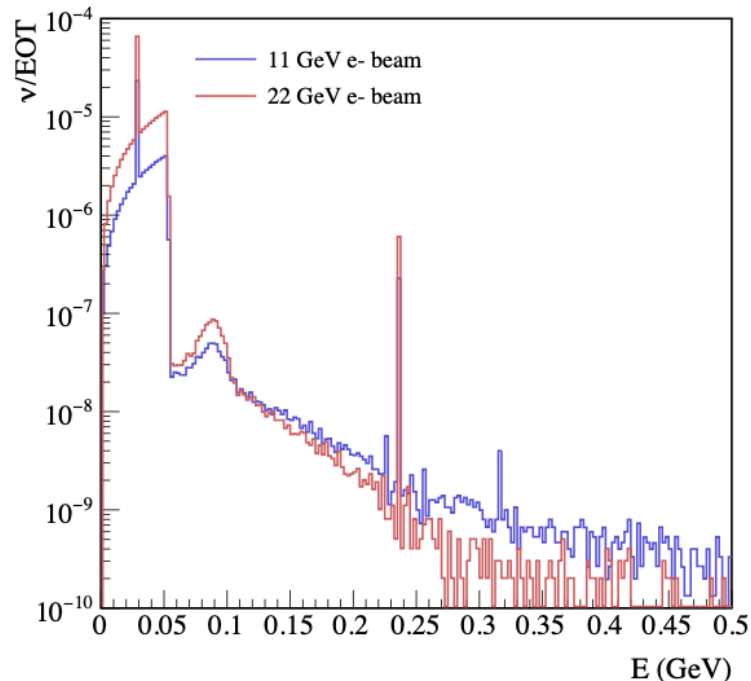
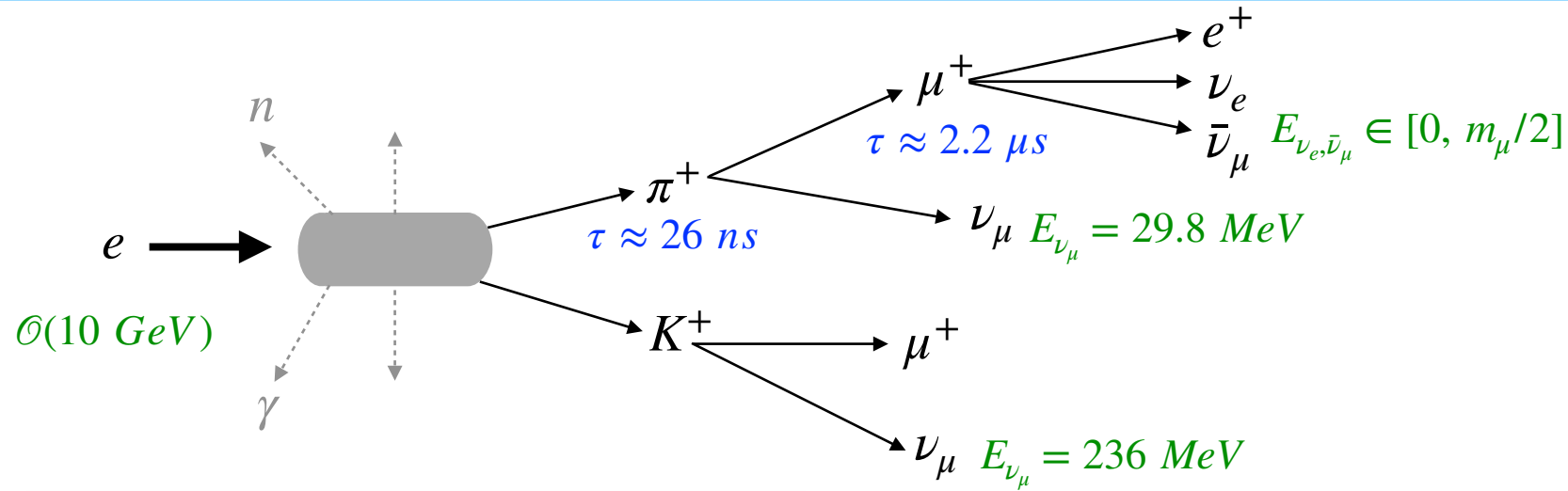
piDAR and Supernova Neutrinos



*M. Battaglieri et al., Instruments 8, 1 (2024)*



# Neutrinos at BDX Facility at JLab



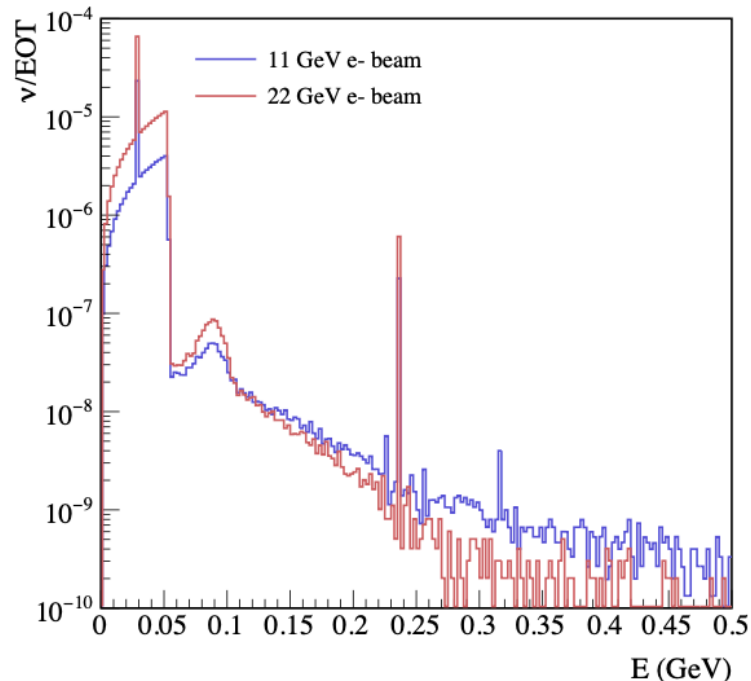
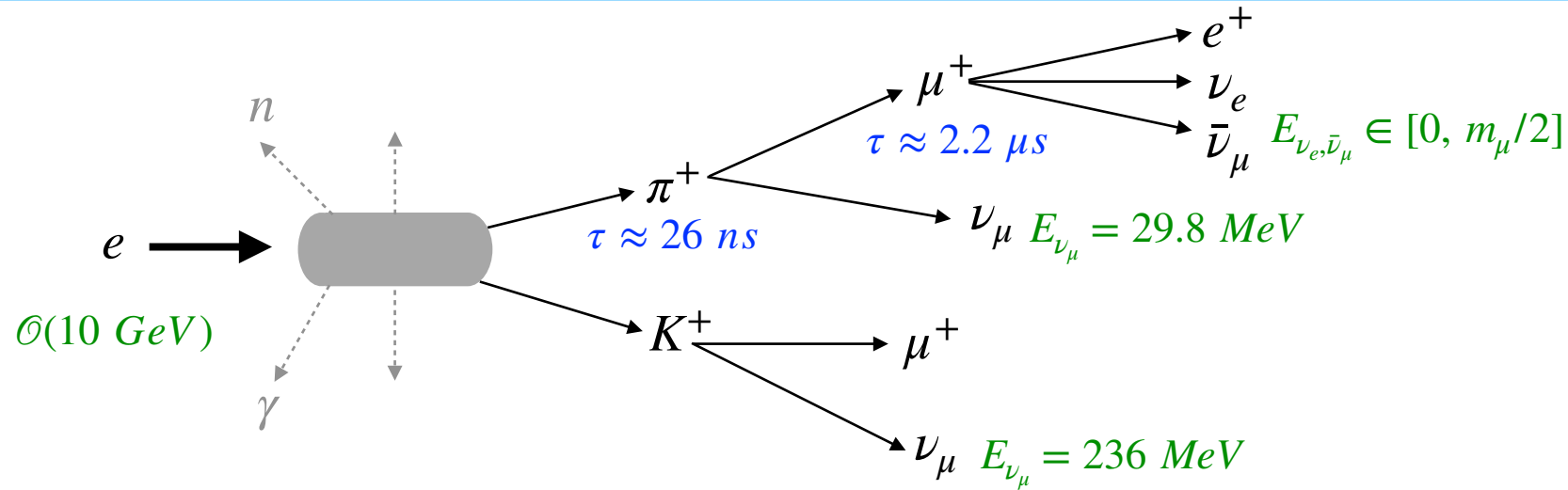
*M. Battaglieri et al., Instruments 8, 1 (2024)*

## Physics Opportunities with PiDAR and KDAR Neutrinos:

Neutrino physics, nuclear physics, SM precision test, astrophysics, BSM physics



# Neutrinos at BDX Facility at JLab



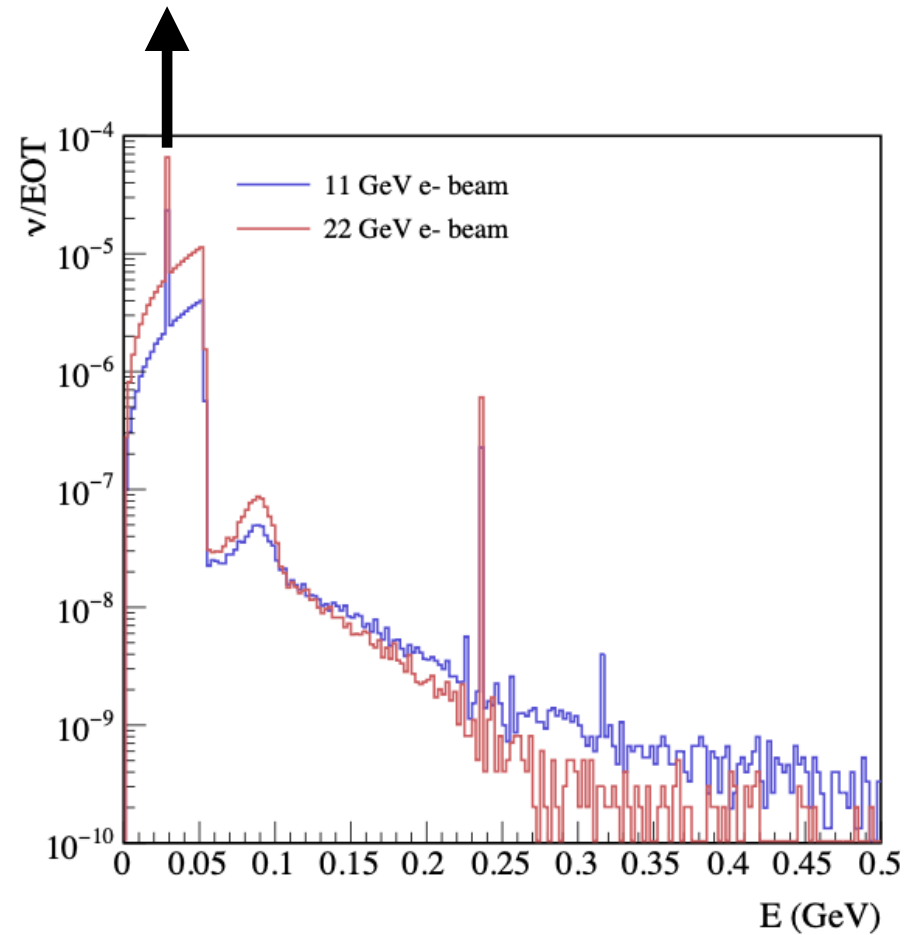
*M. Battaglieri et al., Instruments 8, 1 (2024)*

- Proton beam-dump based sources worldwide:

**piDAR:** SNS at ORNL, LANSCE at LANL, MLF at JPARC, F2D2 at FNAL, ESS, ...

**KDAR:** NuMI/LBNF at FNAL, MLF at JPARC, ...

## Physics with piDAR Neutrinos

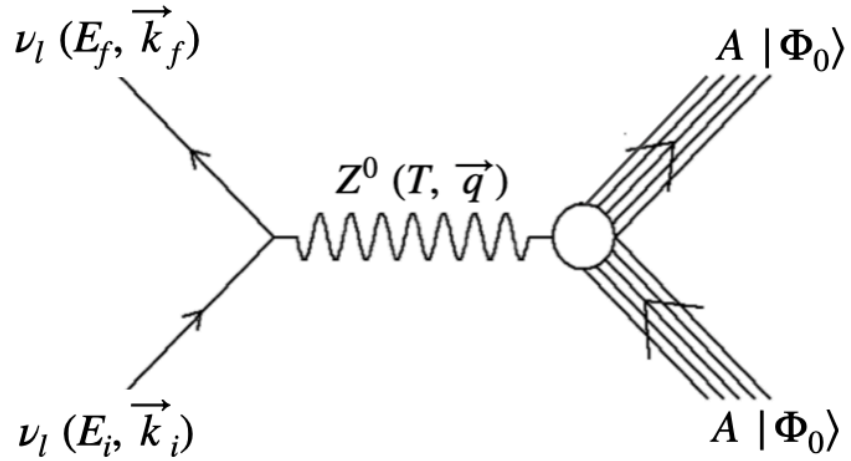


*M. Battaglieri et al., Instruments 8, 1 (2024)*



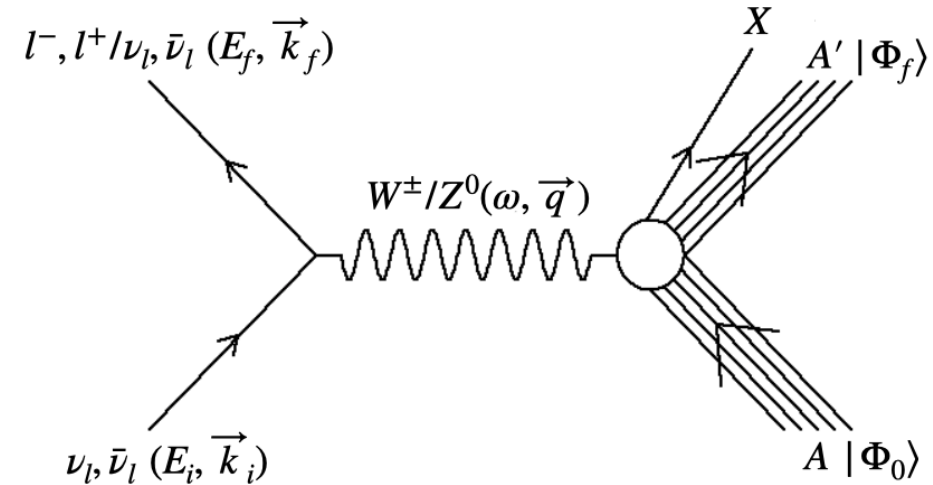
# 10s of MeV Neutrinos-Nucleus Scattering

## Coherent elastic [CEvNS]



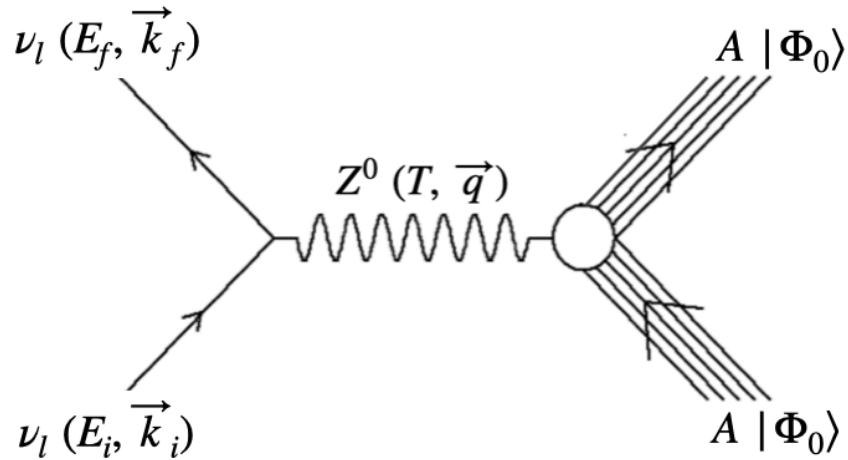
Coherent Elastic Neutrino Nucleus Scattering (CEvNS)

## Inelastic CC/NC



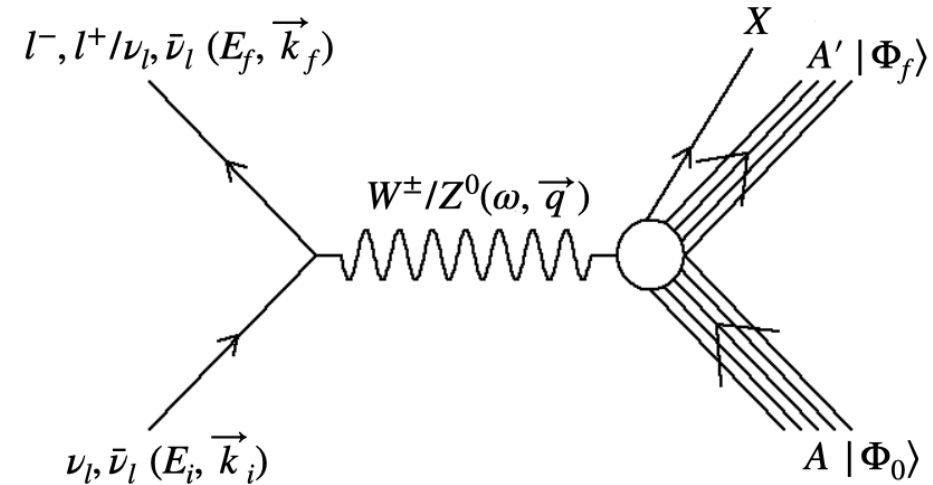
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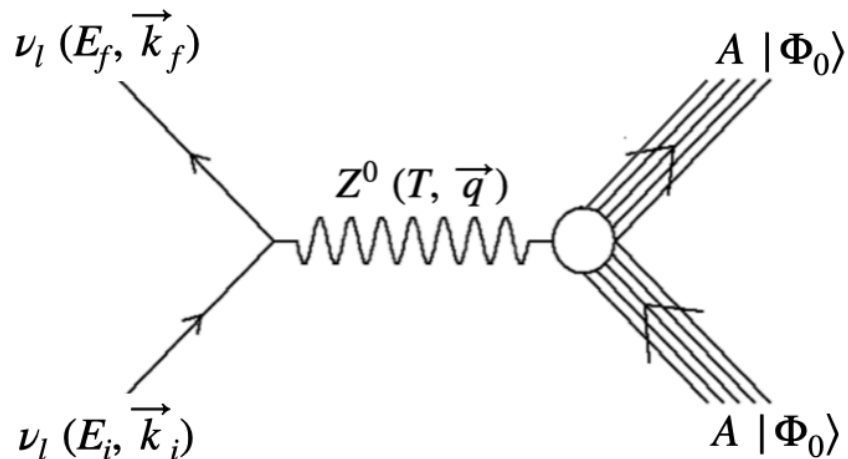
## Inelastic CC/NC



- Final state nucleus stays in its ground state
- Tiny recoil energy, larger cross section
- Signal: keV energy nuclear recoil (gammas)
- First observed by COHERENT collaboration in 2017
- Opens new window of opportunity to look for weakly interacting new physics at low energies

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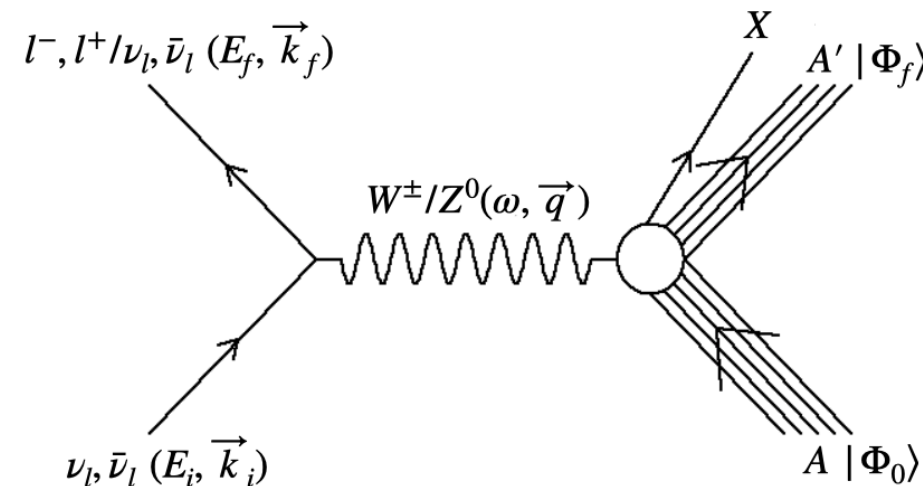
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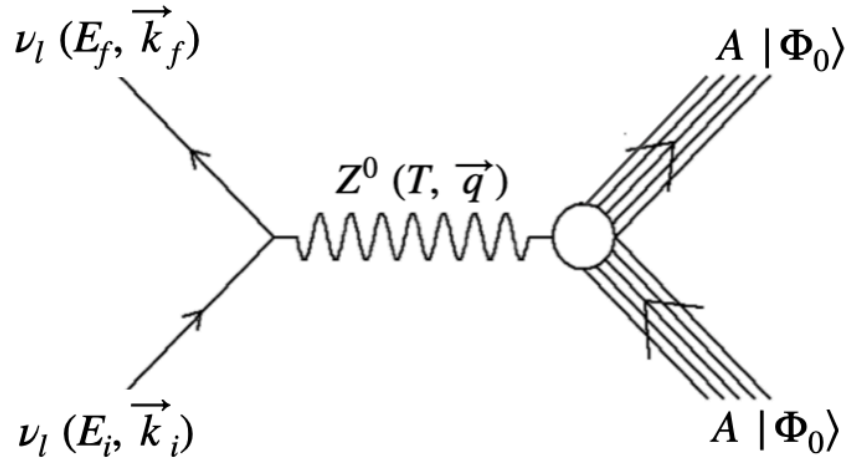
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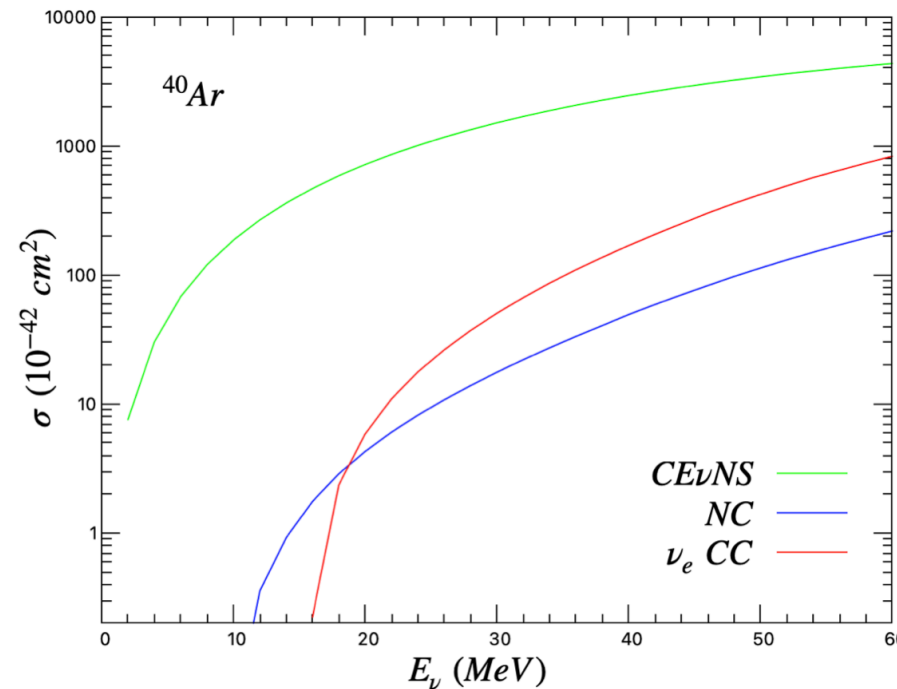
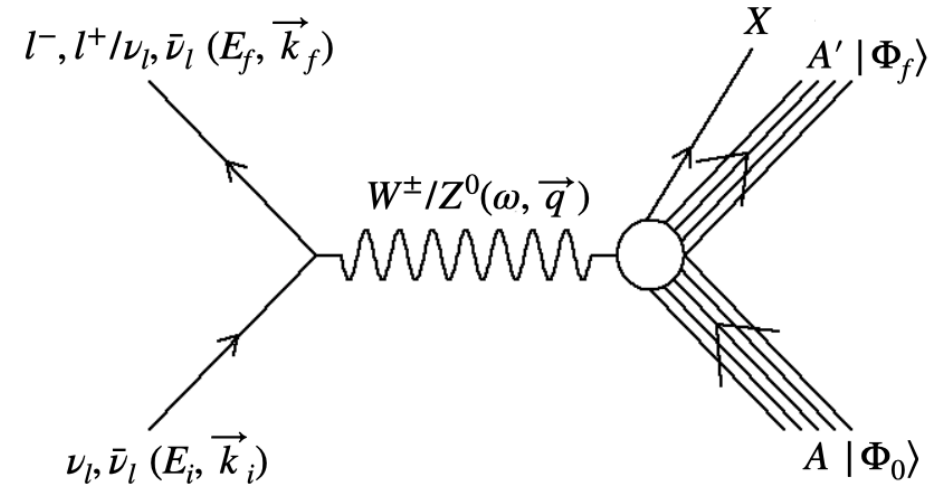
- Small energy transferred to the nucleus
- Nucleus excites to states with well-defined excitation energy, spin and parity ( $J^\pi$ ).
- Followed by nuclear de-excitation into gammas, p, n, nuclear fragmentations.
- Complementary with supernova neutrinos

# 10s of MeV Neutrinos-Nucleus Scattering

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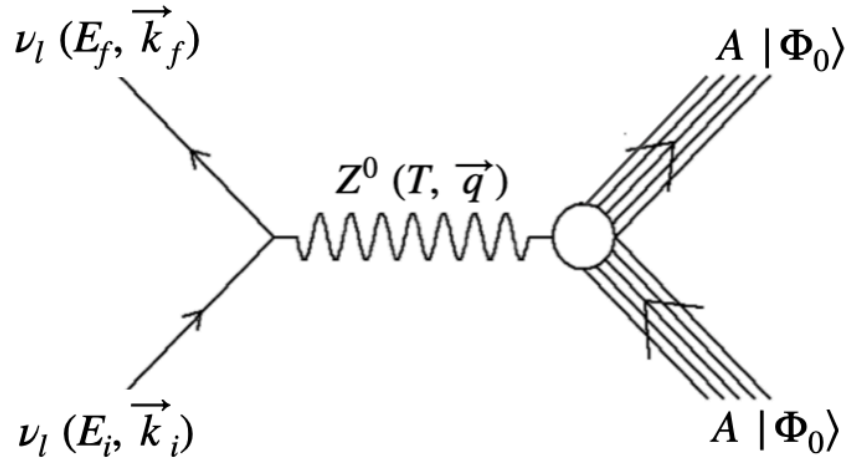


- At 10s of MeV, CEvNS cross section is significantly larger than inelastic ones.

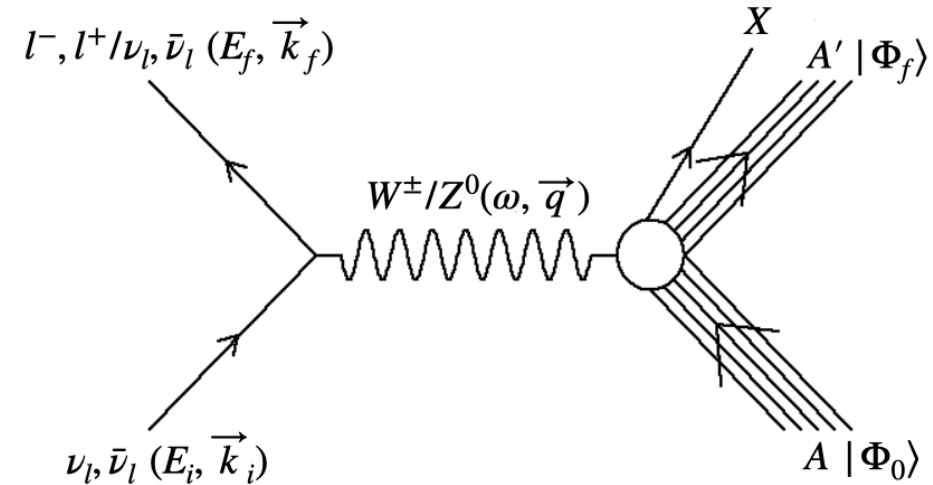
V. Pandey, Prog. Part. Nucl. Phys., 104078 (2024)

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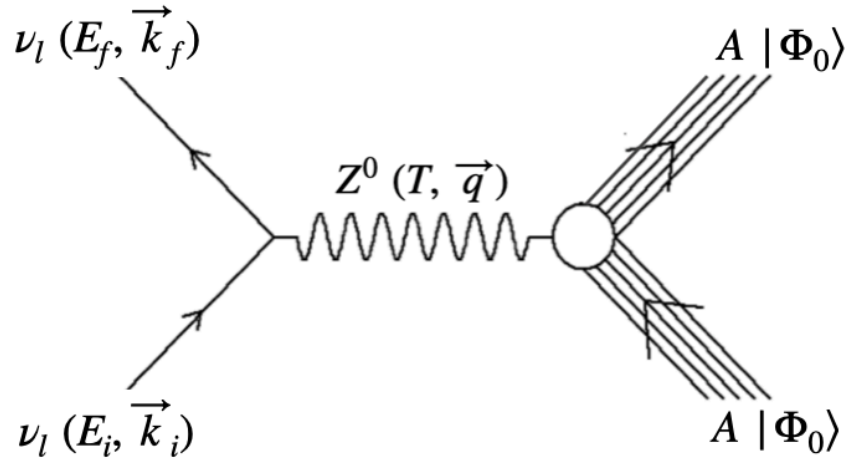
$$\sum_{fi} |\mathcal{M}|^2 \propto \frac{G_F^2}{2} L_{\mu\nu} W^{\mu\nu}$$

$$\text{Leptonic Tensor: } L_{\mu\nu} = \sum_{fi} (\mathcal{J}_{l,\mu})^\dagger \mathcal{J}_{l,\nu}$$

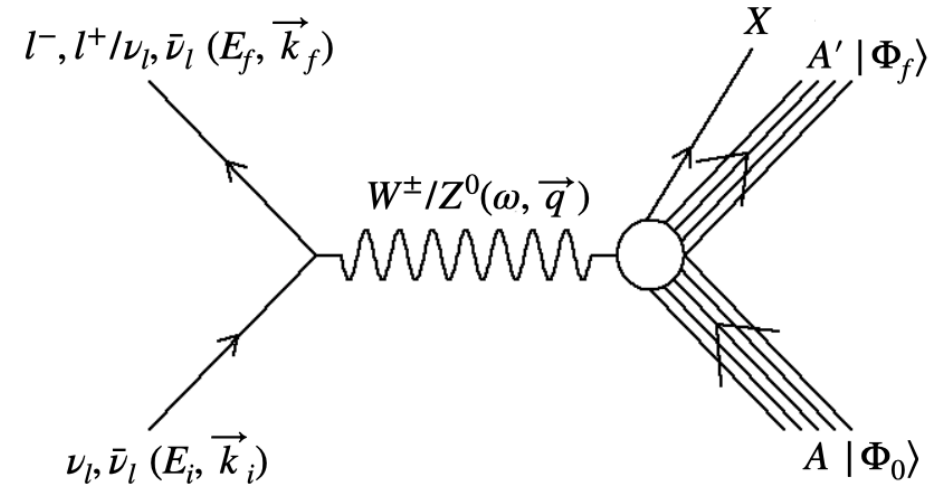
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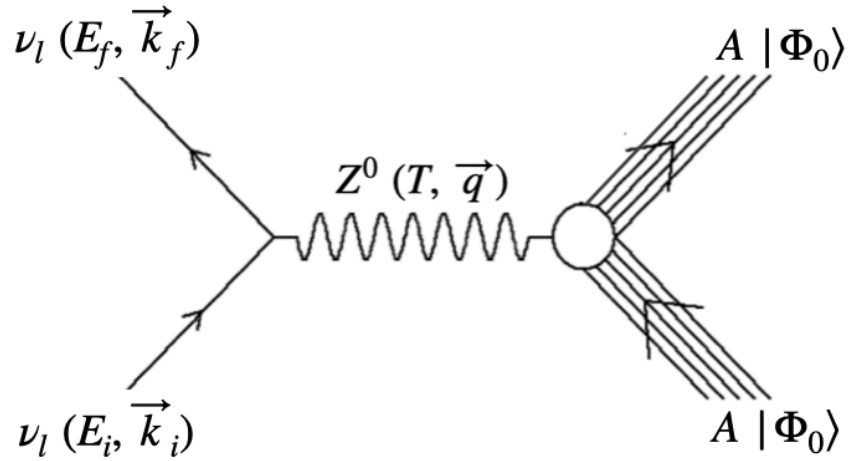
$$\text{Transition Amplitude: } \mathcal{J}_n^\mu = \langle \Phi_0 | \hat{J}_n^\mu(q) | \Phi_0 \rangle$$

## Cross Section:

$$d\sigma \propto \frac{G_F^2}{4\pi} Q_W^2 F_W^2(q)$$

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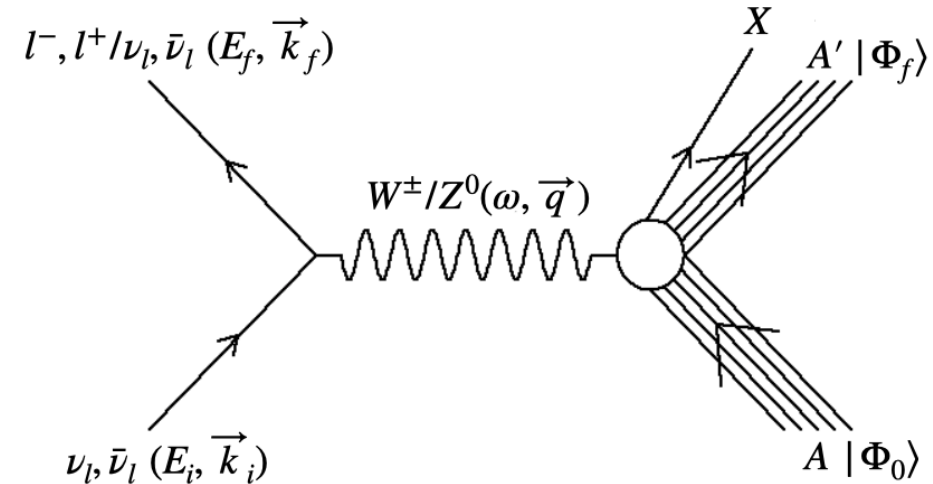
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## Cross Section:

$$d\sigma \propto \frac{G_F^2}{4\pi} \sum_{J^\pi} [v_{CC} W_{CC} + v_{CL} W_{CL} + v_{LL} W_{LL} + v_T W_T \pm v_{T'} W_{T'}]$$



# CEvNS Cross Section and Form Factors

## ■ Cross section (tree level)\*:

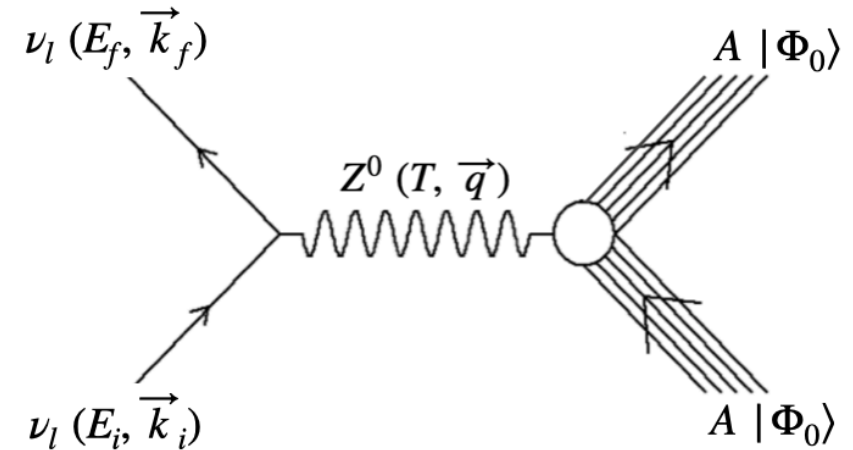
$$\frac{d\sigma}{dT} = \frac{G_F^2}{\pi} M_A \left[ 1 - \frac{T}{E_i} - \frac{M_A T}{2E_i^2} \right] \frac{Q_W^2}{4} F_W^2(q)$$

## ■ Weak Form Factor:

$$\begin{aligned} Q_W F_W(q) &\approx \langle \Phi_0 | \hat{J}_0(q) | \Phi_0 \rangle \\ &\approx (1 - 4 \sin^2 \theta_W) Z F_p(q) - N F_n(q) \\ &\approx 2\pi \int d^3r \left[ (1 - 4 \sin^2 \theta_W) \rho_p(r) - \rho_n(r) \right] j_0(qr) \end{aligned}$$

Charge density and charge form factor: proton densities and charge form factors are well known through decades of elastic electron scattering experiments.

Neutron densities and neutron form factor: neutron densities and form factors are poorly known. Note that CEvNS is primarily sensitive to neutron density distributions ( $1 - 4 \sin^2 \theta_W \approx 0$ ).



$$T \in \left[ 0, \frac{2E_i^2}{(M_A + 2E_i)} \right]$$

$$Q_W^2 = [g_n^V N + g_p^V Z]^2$$

\*barring radiative corrections, for radiate corrections, see:  
O. Tomalak, P. Machado, V. Pandey, R. Plestid, JHEP 02, 097 (2021)

# CEvNS and PVES Experimental Measurements

- **Electroweak probes** such as parity-violating electron scattering ([PVES](#)) and [CEvNS](#) provide relatively model-independent ways of determining weak form factor and neutron distributions.

*T. W. Donnelly, J. Dubach and I. Sick, Nucl. Phys. A 503, 589-631 (1989).*

- [CEvNS Cross Section](#)

$$\frac{d\sigma}{dT} = \frac{G_F^2}{\pi} M_A \left[ 1 - \frac{T}{E_i} - \frac{M_A T}{2E_i^2} \right] \frac{Q_W^2}{4} F_W^2(q)$$

- [PVES Asymmetry](#)

$$A_{pv} = \frac{d\sigma/d\Omega_+ - d\sigma/d\Omega_-}{d\sigma/d\Omega_+ + d\sigma/d\Omega_-} = \frac{G_F q^2 |Q_W|}{4\pi\alpha\sqrt{2}Z} \frac{F_W(q)}{F_{ch}(q^2)}$$

- Both processes are described in first order perturbation theory via the exchange of an electroweak gauge boson between a lepton and a nucleus.
- CEvNS: the lepton is a neutrino and a  $Z^0$  boson is exchanged.
- PVES: the lepton is an electron, but measuring the asymmetry allows one to select the interference between the  $\gamma$  and  $Z^0$  exchange.
- As a result, both the CEvNS cross section and the PVES asymmetry depend on the weak form factor  $F_W(Q^2)$ , which is mostly determined by the neutron distribution within the nucleus.

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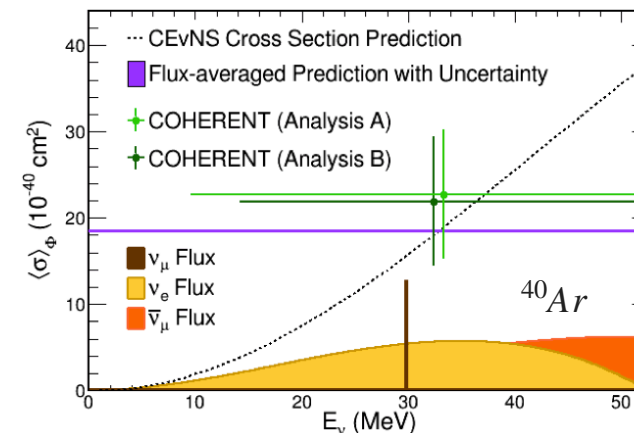
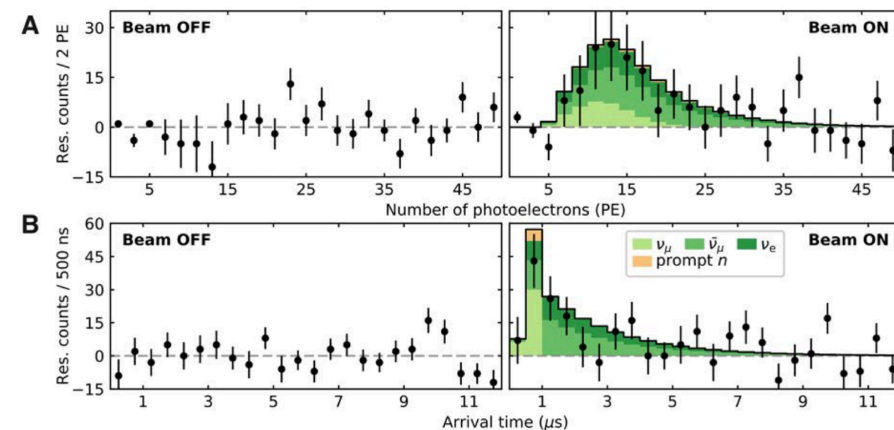
*D. Z. Freedman, Phys. Rev. D 9, 1389-1392 (1974)*

*“Freedman declared that the experimental detection of CEvNS would be an “act of hubris” due to the associated “grave experimental difficulties”.*

- The maximum recoil energy

$$T_{\max} = \frac{E_{\nu}}{1 + M_A/(2E_{\nu})}$$

## COHERENT Collaboration at SNS at ORNL



*Science 357, 6356, 1123-1126 (2017)*  
*Phys. Rev. Lett. 126, 012002 (2021)*

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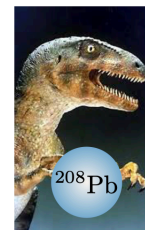
- The parity violating asymmetry for elastic electron scattering is the fractional difference in cross section for positive helicity and negative helicity electrons.

$$A_{pv} = \frac{d\sigma/d\Omega_+ - d\sigma/d\Omega_-}{d\sigma/d\Omega_+ + d\sigma/d\Omega_-} = \frac{G_F q^2 |Q_W|}{4\pi\alpha\sqrt{2}Z} \frac{F_W(q)}{F_{ch}(q^2)}$$

- Here  $F_{ch}$  is the charge form factor that is typically known from unpolarized electron scattering. Therefore, one can extract  $F_W$  from the measurement of  $A_{PV}$ .

Experiment	Target	$q^2$ (GeV <sup>2</sup> )	$A_{pv}$ (ppm)
PREX	<sup>208</sup> Pb	0.00616	0.550 ± 0.018
CREX	<sup>48</sup> Ca	0.0297	
Qweak	<sup>27</sup> Al	0.0236	
MREX	<sup>208</sup> Pb	0.0073	

[arXiv:2203.06853 \[hep-ex\]](#)



Pb Radius Experiment (PREX)



Calcium Radius Experiment (CREX)



Mainz Radius Experiment (MREX)  
At P2 experimental hall with <sup>208</sup>Pb

# CEvNS Cross Section and Form Factors

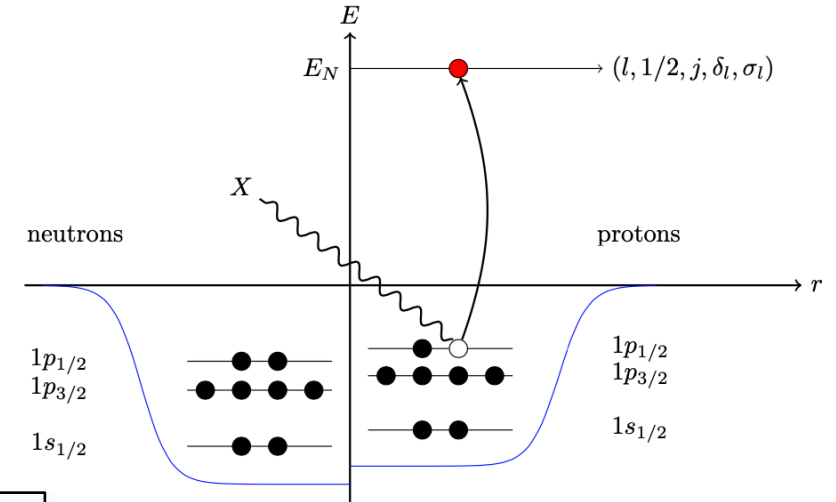
- Nuclear ground state described as a many-body quantum mechanical system where nucleons are bound in an effective nuclear potential.
- Solve Hartree-Fock (**HF**) equation with a Skyrme (**SkE2**) nuclear potential to obtain single-nucleon wave functions for the bound nucleons in the nuclear ground state.
- Evaluate proton and neutron density distributions and form factors

$$\rho_{\tau}(r) = \frac{1}{4\pi r^2} \sum_{\alpha} v_{\alpha,\tau}^2 (2j_{\alpha} + 1) |\phi_{\alpha,\tau}(r)|^2$$

$$F_{\tau}(q) = \frac{1}{N} \int d^3r j_0(qr) \rho_{\tau}(r)$$

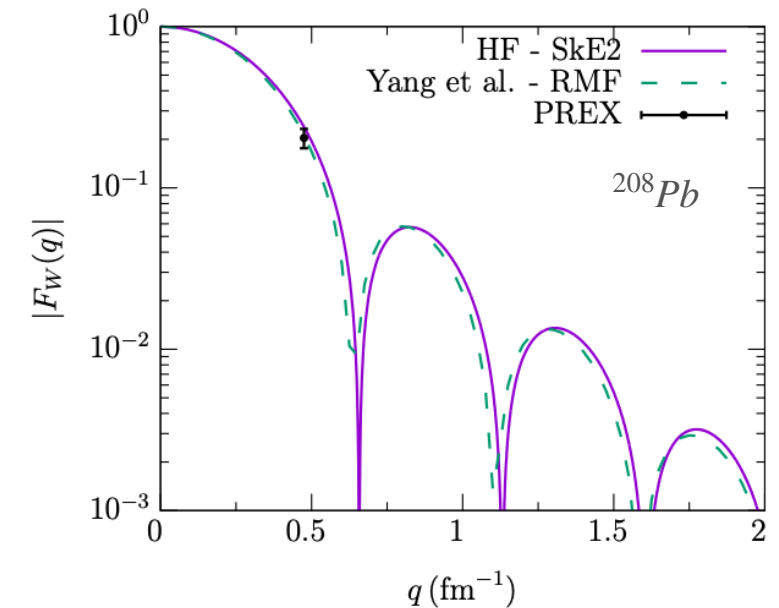
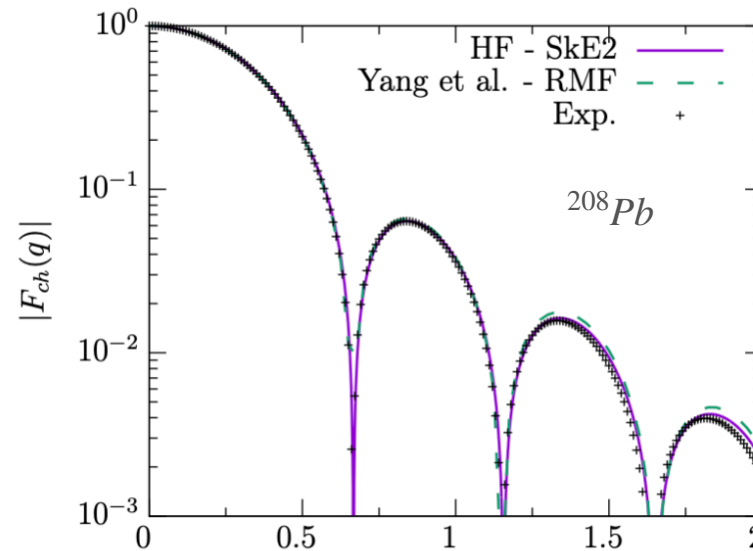
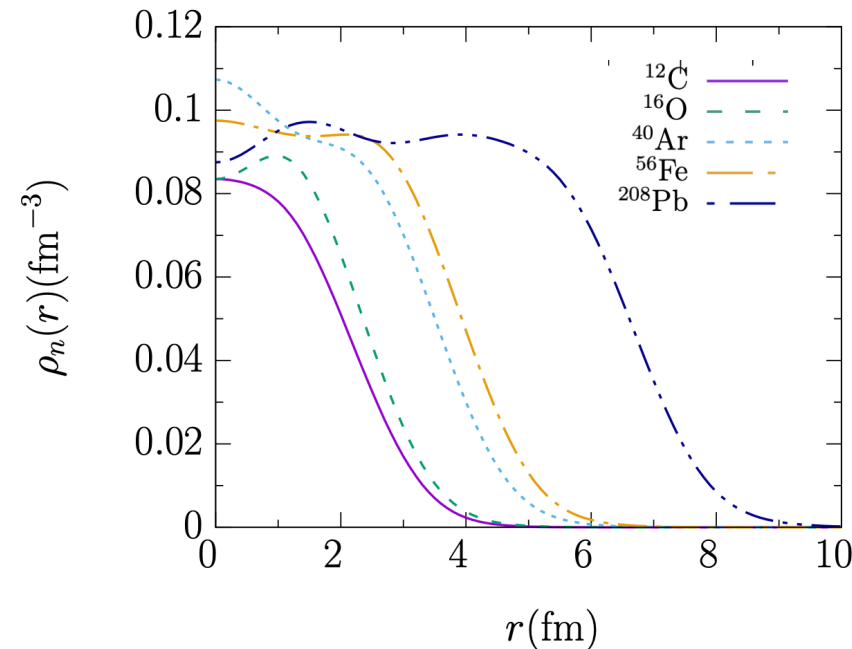
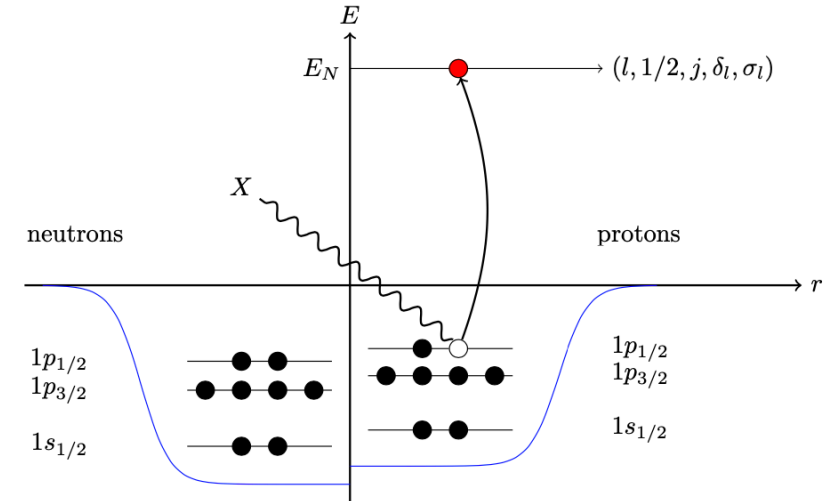
$$(\alpha \in n_{\alpha}, l_{\alpha}, j_{\alpha})$$

$$(\tau = p, n)$$



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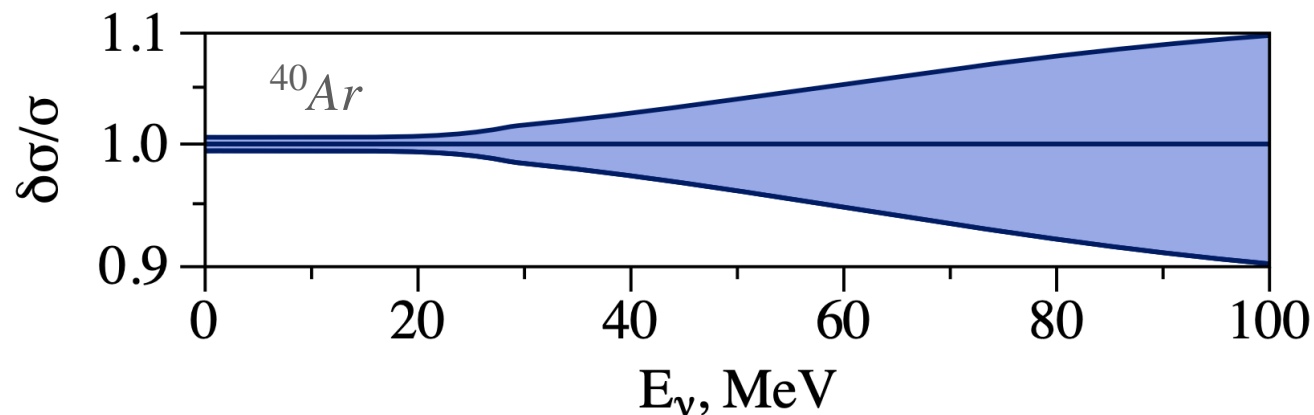
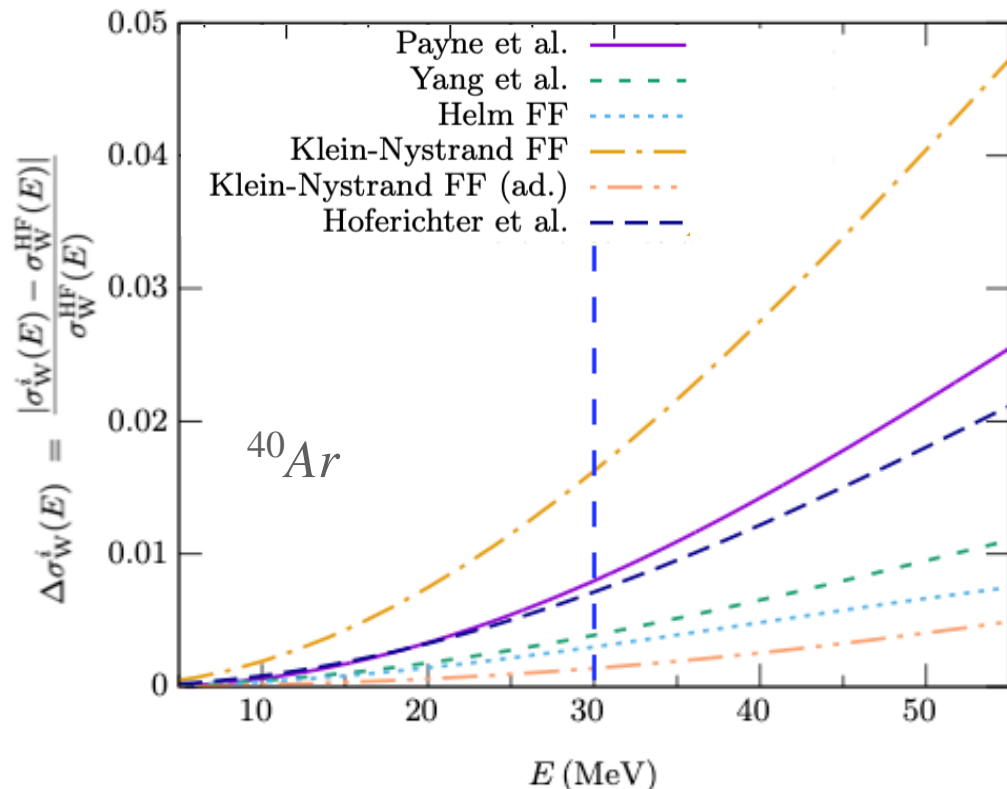
Data: H. De Vries, et al., *Atom. Data Nucl. Data Tabl.* 36, 495 (1987),  
S. Abrahamyan et al., *Phys. Rev. Lett.* 108, 112502 (2012)

N. Van Dessel, V. Pandey, H. Ray and  
N. Jachowicz, *Universe* 9, 207 (2023)



# CEvNS Cross Section and Form Factors

✱ Only a few percent theoretical uncertainty on the CEvNS cross section!



*O. Tomalak, P. Machado, V. Pandey, R. Plestid, JHEP 02, 097 (2021)*

*N. Van Dessel, V. Pandey, H. Ray and N. Jachowicz, Universe 9, 207 (2023)*

*Yang et al. Phys. Rev. C 100, 054301 (2019)*

*Payne et al., Phys. Rev. C 100, 061304 (2019)*

*Hoferichter et al. [arXiv:2007.08529 [hep-ph]]*

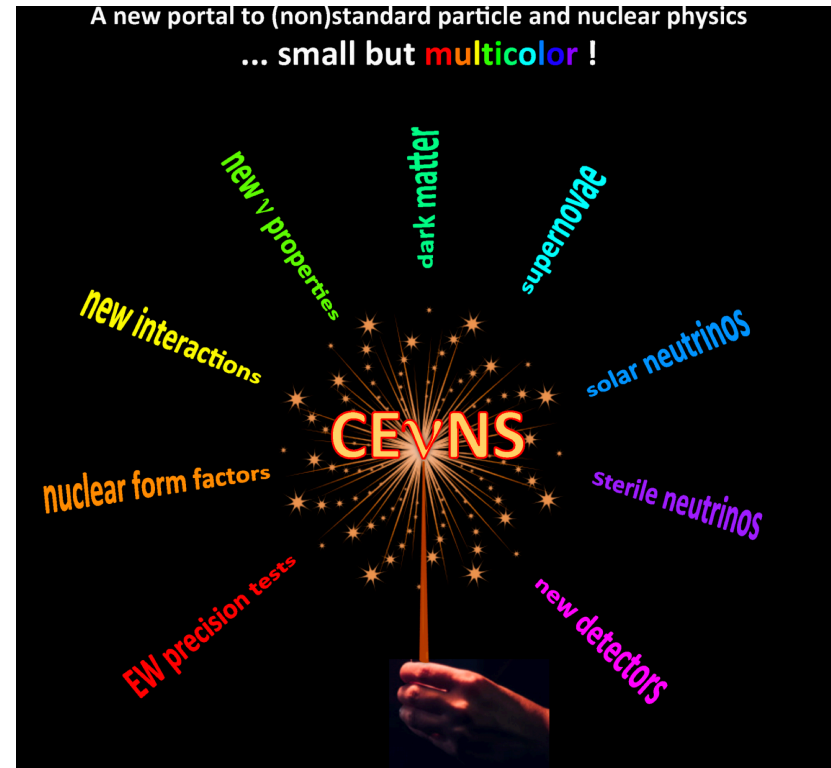


# CEvNS and New Physics

- Any deviation from the SM predicted event rate, either with a change in the total event rate or with a change in the shape of the recoil spectrum, could indicate new contributions to the interaction cross-section.

$$\frac{d\sigma}{dT} = \frac{G_F^2}{\pi} M_A \left[ 1 - \frac{T}{E_i} - \frac{M_A T}{2E_i^2} \right] \frac{Q_W^2}{4} F_W^2(q)$$

$$Q_W^2 = [g_p^V Z + g_n^V N]^2 = [(1 - 4 \sin^2 \theta_W) Z - N]^2$$



Eligio Lisi, NuINT 2018

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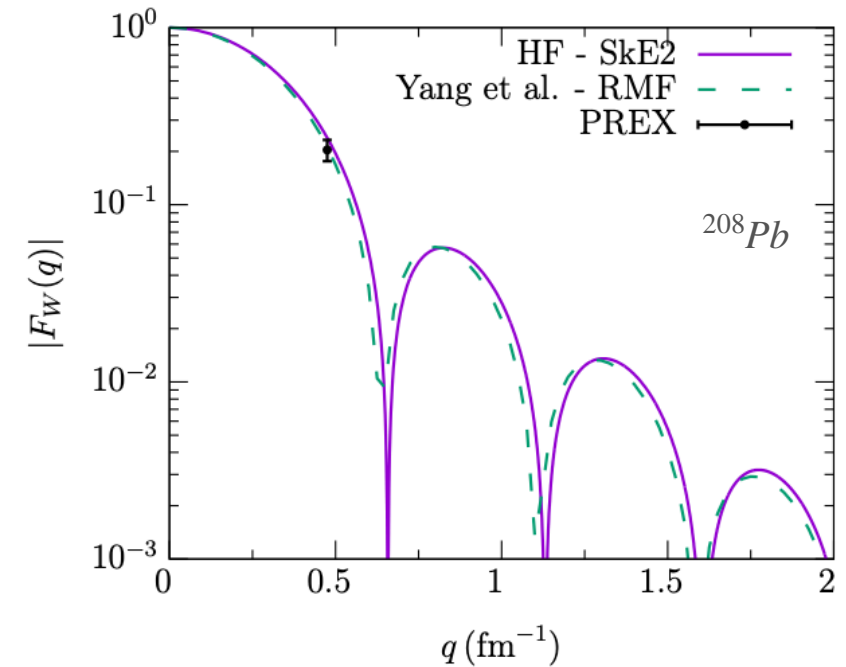
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$$Q_W^2 = [g_p^V Z + g_n^V N]^2 = [(1 - 4 \sin^2 \theta_W) Z - N]^2$$

## ■ Standard Model Physics:

- Weak Nuclear Form Factor**  $F_W(q)$  at low  $Q$   
neutron density distribution, neutron skin of a nucleus  
complements PVES experiments



# CEvNS and New Physics

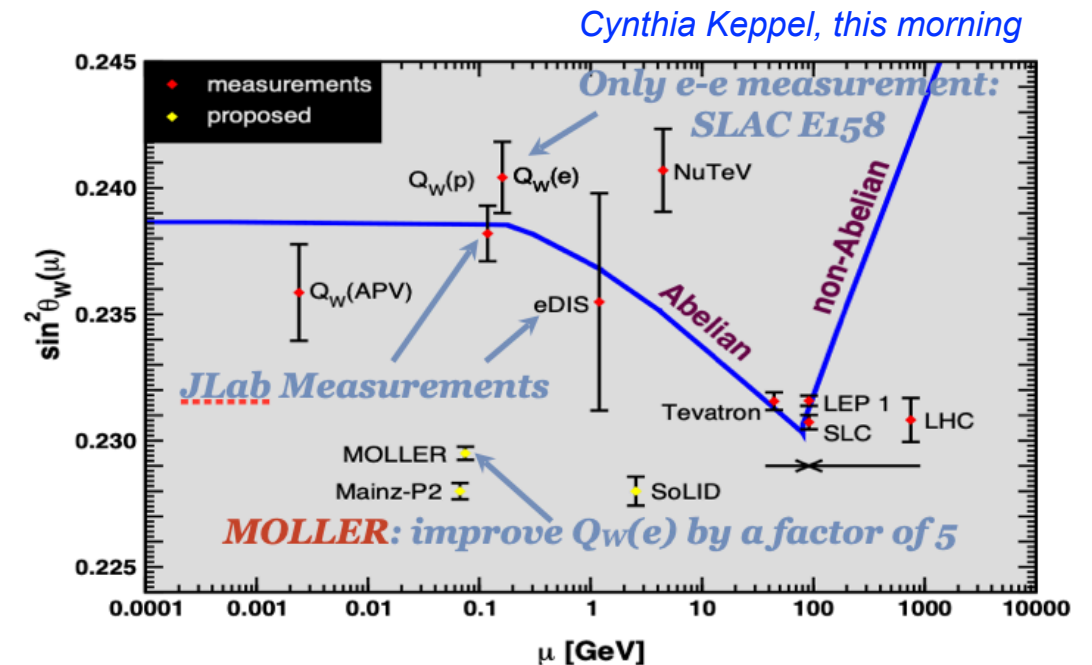
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$$Q_W^2 = [g_p^V Z + g_n^V N]^2 = [(1 - 4 \sin^2 \theta_W) Z - N]^2$$

## Standard Model Physics:

- Weak Nuclear Form Factor**  $F_W(q)$  at low  $Q$   
neutron density distribution, neutron skin of a nucleus  
complements PVES experiments
- Weak Mixing Angle**  $\theta_W$  at low  $Q$   
complements MOLLER experiment



# CEvNS and New Physics

- Any deviation from the SM predicted event rate, either with a change in the total event rate or with a change in the shape of the recoil spectrum, could indicate new contributions to the interaction cross-section.

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- Neutrino Electromagnetic Properties:

- Neutrino Magnetic Moment

- Neutrino Charge Radius

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## ■ Beyond the Standard Model Physics:

- Neutrino Electromagnetic Properties:**

- **Neutrino Magnetic Moment**

$$\left( \frac{d\sigma}{dT} \right)_{\text{tot}} = \left( \frac{d\sigma}{dT} \right)_{\text{SM}} + \left( \frac{d\sigma}{dT} \right)_{\text{EM}}$$

$$\left( \frac{d\sigma}{dT} \right)_{\text{EM}} = \frac{\pi \alpha^2 \mu_\nu^2 Z^2}{m_e^2} \left( \frac{1 - T/E_\nu}{T} + \frac{T}{4E_\nu^2} \right) F_{\text{ch}}^2(q^2)$$

- **Neutrino Charge Radius**

$$\sin^2 \theta_W \rightarrow \sin^2 \theta_W + \frac{\sqrt{2} \pi \alpha}{3 G_F} \langle r_{\nu_\alpha}^2 \rangle.$$

Flavor-dependent effect; muon- and electron-neutrino's event rates can be separated using the timing structure of piDAR

# CEvNS and New Physics

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## ■ Beyond the Standard Model Physics:

- Sterile Neutrino Oscillations**

Flavor-independent CEvNS can be used to probe the disappearance of active neutrinos by setting up multiple identical detectors at different baselines from the neutrino production point.

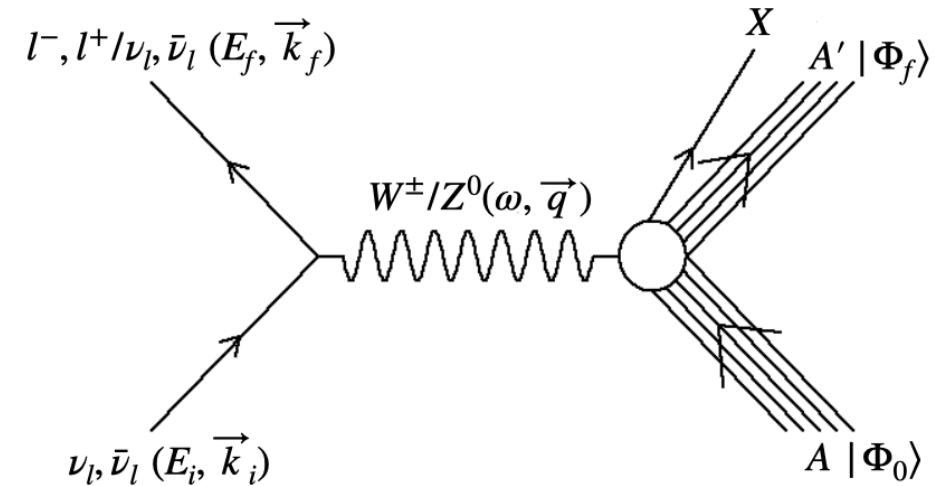
- Non-Standard Interactions (NSI) of Neutrinos**

All coupling except  $\epsilon_{\tau\tau}$  are accessible

Timing can allow separating electron and muon couplings

# 10s of MeV Inelastic Neutrino-Nucleus Scattering

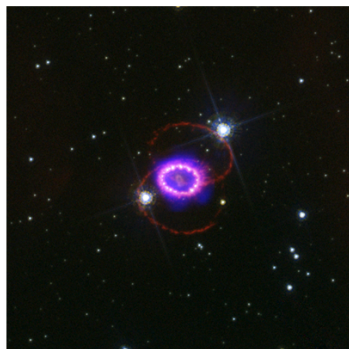
## Inelastic CC/NC



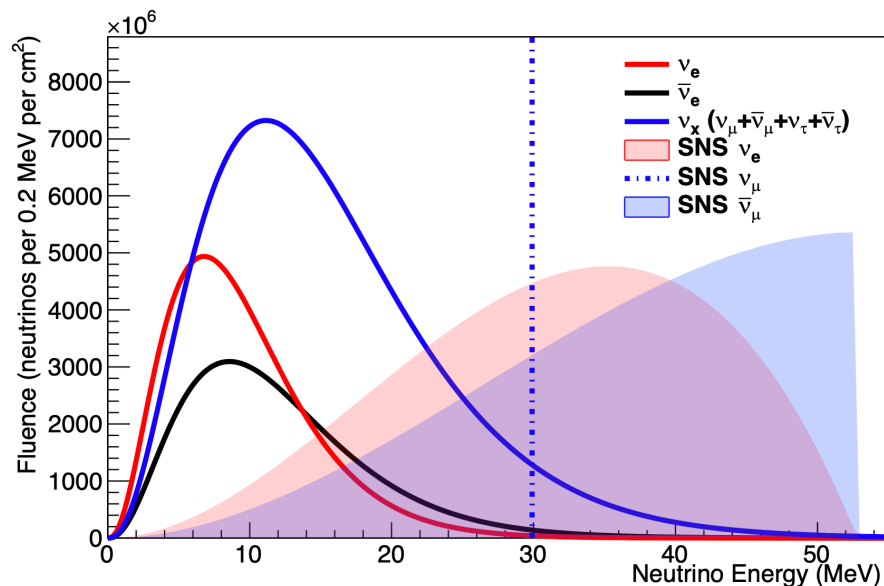
- Small energy transferred to the nucleus
- Nucleus excites to states with well-defined excitation energy, spin and parity ( $J^\pi$ ).
- Followed by nuclear de-excitation into gammas, p, n, nuclear fragmentations.
- Complementary with supernova neutrinos



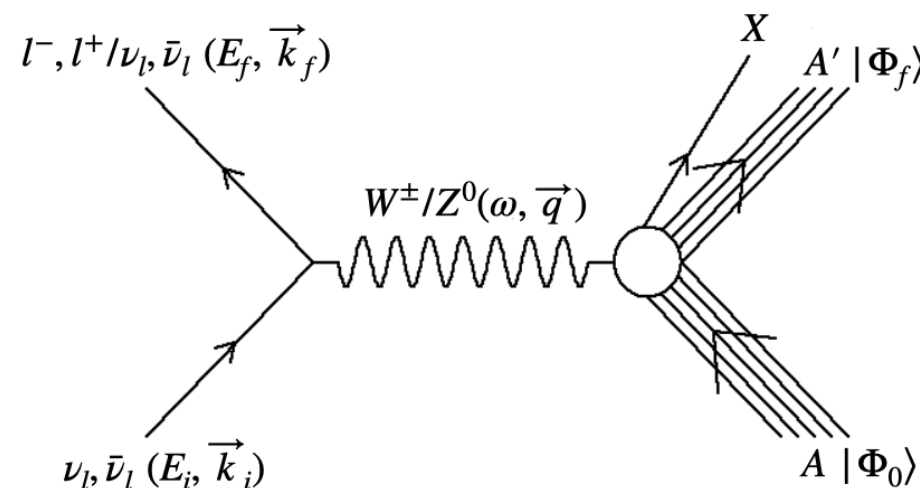
# 10s of MeV Inelastic Neutrino-Nucleus Scattering: Supernova Neutrinos



piDAR and Supernova Neutrinos



## Inelastic CC/NC

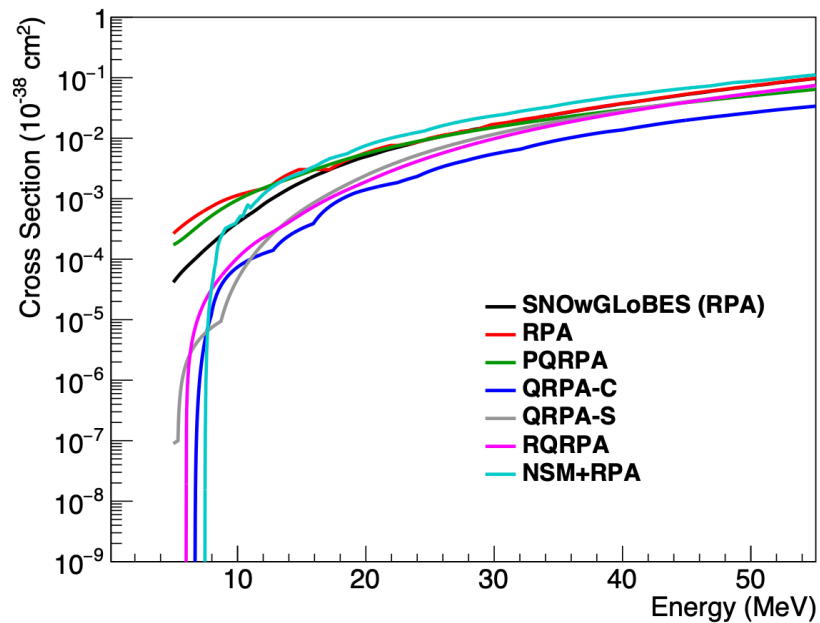


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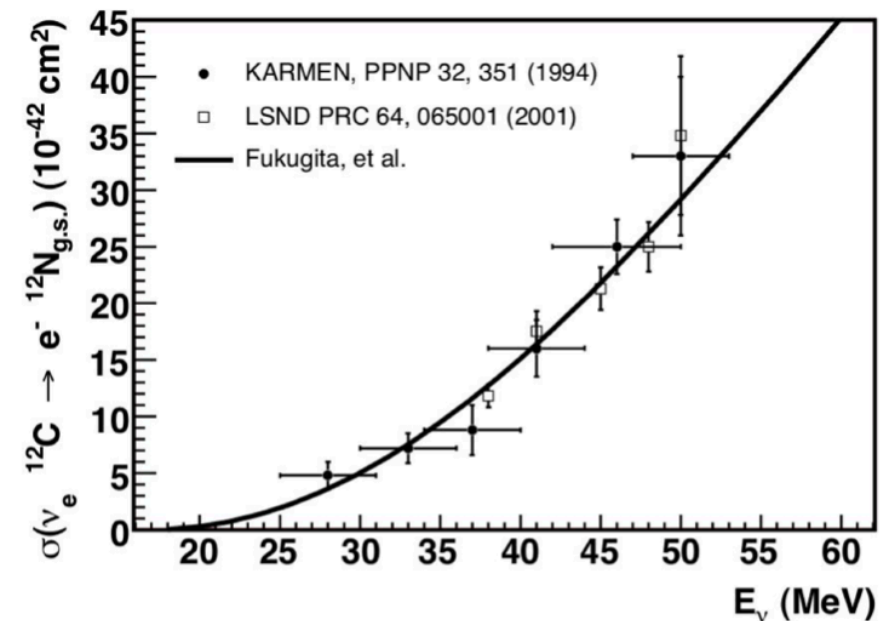
# 10s of MeV Inelastic Neutrino-Nucleus Scattering: Supernova Neutrinos

- DUNE relies on  $\nu_e$  CC inelastic neutrino-nucleus scattering process to detect neutrinos from **core-collapse supernova**.
- The inelastic neutrino-nucleus cross sections are quite poorly understood. There are very few existing measurements, none at better than the 10% uncertainty level. As a result, the uncertainties on the theoretical calculations of, e.g., neutrino-argon cross sections are not well quantified at all at these energies.

*No measurements on Argon yet*



*Past measurements on Carbon*



*Rev. Mod. Phys. 84,1307 (2012)*

# 10s of MeV Inelastic Neutrino-Nucleus Scattering: Supernova Neutrinos

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Reaction Channel	Experiment	Measurement ( $10^{-42} \text{ cm}^2$ )
$^{12}\text{C}(\nu_e, e^-)^{12}\text{N}_{\text{g.s.}}$	KARMEN	$9.1 \pm 0.5(\text{stat}) \pm 0.8(\text{sys})$
	E225	$10.5 \pm 1.0(\text{stat}) \pm 1.0(\text{sys})$
	LSND	$8.9 \pm 0.3(\text{stat}) \pm 0.9(\text{sys})$
$^{12}\text{C}(\nu_e, e^-)^{12}\text{N}^*$	KARMEN	$5.1 \pm 0.6(\text{stat}) \pm 0.5(\text{sys})$
	E225	$3.6 \pm 2.0(\text{tot})$
	LSND	$4.3 \pm 0.4(\text{stat}) \pm 0.6(\text{sys})$
$^{12}\text{C}(\nu_\mu, \nu_\mu)^{12}\text{C}^*$	KARMEN	$3.2 \pm 0.5(\text{stat}) \pm 0.4(\text{sys})$
$^{12}\text{C}(\nu, \nu)^{12}\text{C}^*$	KARMEN	$10.5 \pm 1.0(\text{stat}) \pm 0.9(\text{sys})$
$^{56}\text{Fe}(\nu_e, e^-)^{56}\text{Co}$	KARMEN	$256 \pm 108(\text{stat}) \pm 43(\text{sys})$
$^{127}\text{I}(\nu_e, e^-)^{127}\text{Xe}$	LSND	$284 \pm 91(\text{stat}) \pm 25(\text{sys})$
$^{127}\text{I}(\nu_e, e^-)\text{X}$	COHERENT	$920^{+2.1}_{-1.8}$
$^{nat}\text{Pb}(\nu_e, Xn)$	COHERENT	—

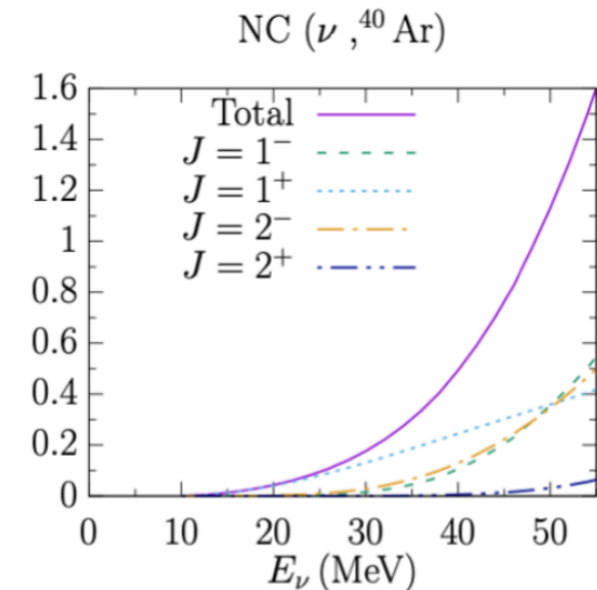
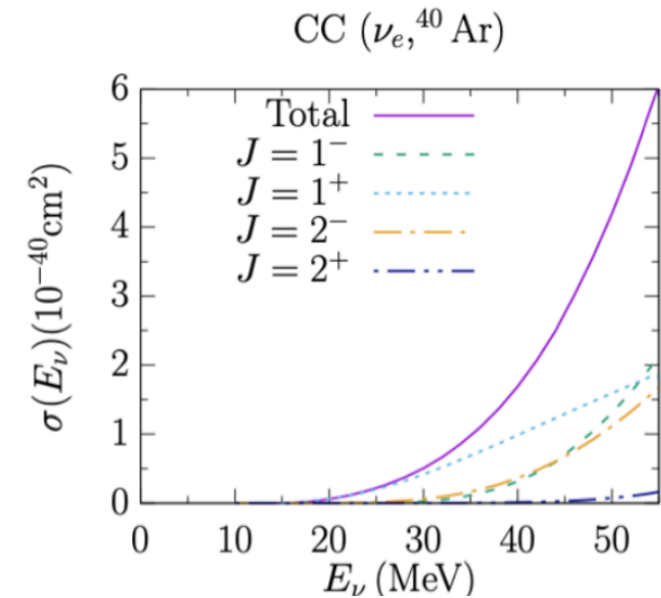
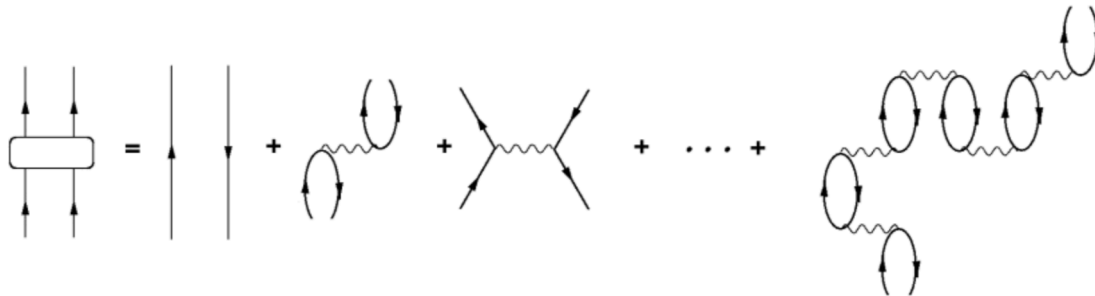
*V. Pandey, Prog. Part. Nucl. Phys., 104078 (2024)*

TABLE III. Flux-averaged cross-sections measured at stopped pion facilities on various nuclei. Experimental data gathered from the LAMPF [89], KARMEN [90–93], E225 [94], LSND [95–97], and COHERENT [98, 99] experiments. Table adapted from the Ref. [9].

# 10s of MeV Inelastic Neutrino-Nucleus Scattering

- In the inelastic cross section calculations, the influence of long-range correlations between the nucleons is introduced through the **continuum Random Phase Approximation (CRPA)** on top of the HF-SkE2 approach.
- CRPA effects are vital to describe the process where the nucleus can be excited to low-lying collective nuclear states.
- The local RPA-polarization propagator is obtained by an iteration to all orders of the first order contribution to the particle-hole Green's function.

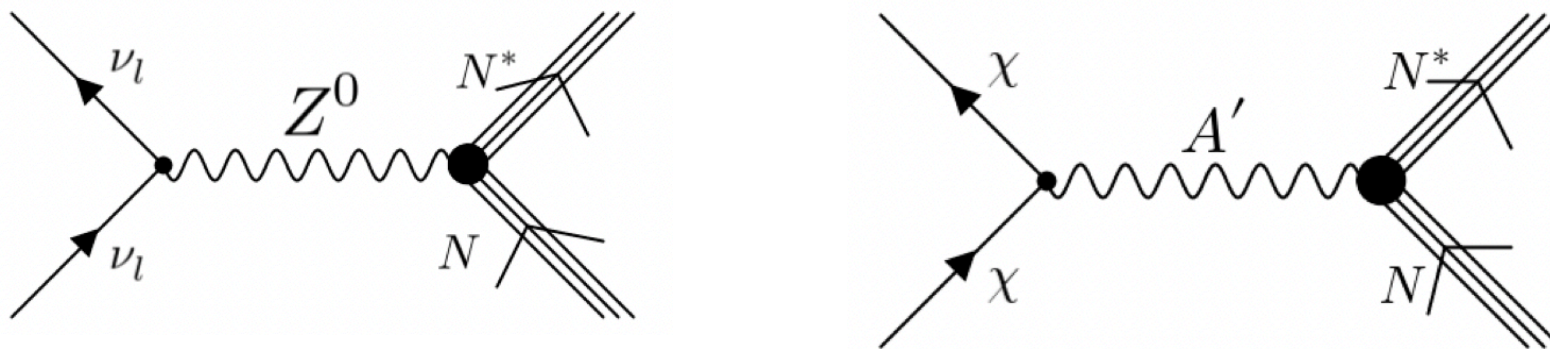
$$\Pi^{(RPA)}(x_1, x_2; E_x) = \Pi^{(0)}(x_1, x_2; E_x) + \frac{1}{\hbar} \int dx dx' \Pi^{(0)}(x_1, x; E_x) \times \tilde{V}(x, x') \Pi^{(RPA)}(x', x_2; E_x)$$



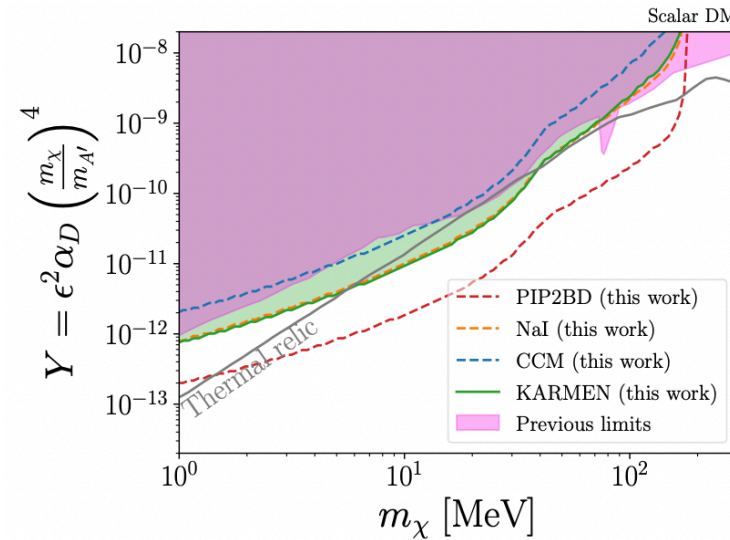
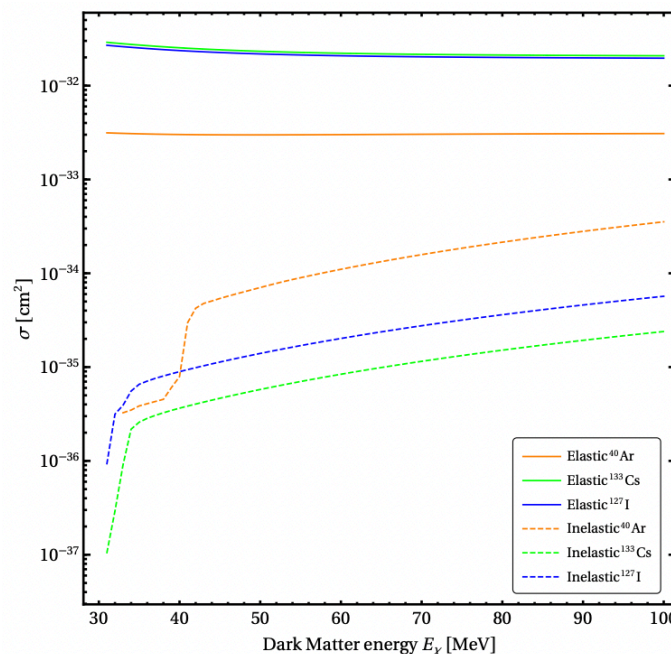
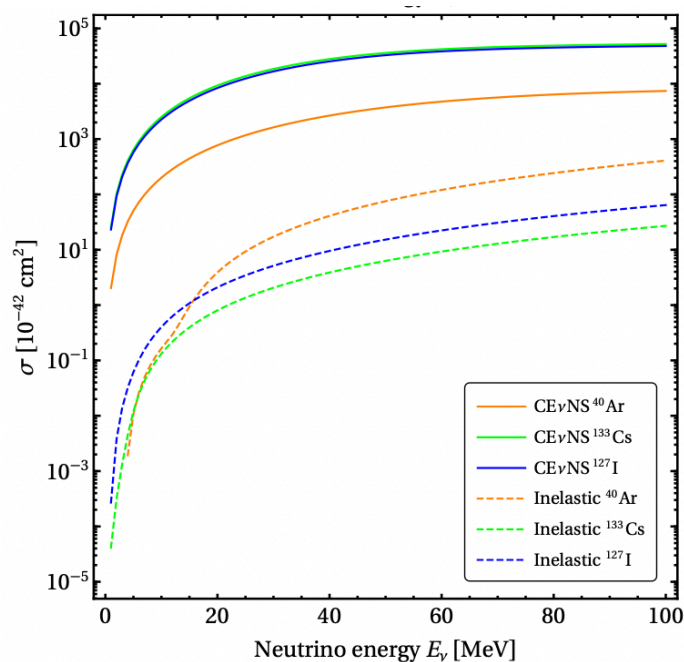


# 10s of MeV Inelastic Neutrino/DarkMatter-Nucleus Scattering

## ■ NC $\nu$ -nucleus $\rightarrow \chi$ -nucleus scattering



$$\begin{aligned}\pi^- + p &\rightarrow n + A' \\ \pi^0 &\rightarrow \gamma + A' \\ \eta^0 &\rightarrow \gamma + A' \\ e^{\pm*} &\rightarrow e^{\pm} + A' \\ A' &\rightarrow \chi\bar{\chi}\end{aligned}$$



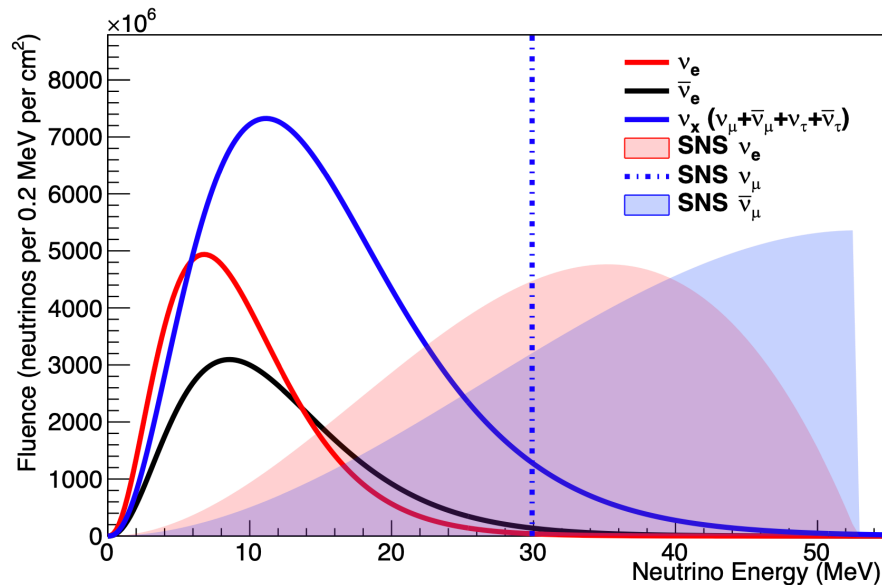
*B. Dutta, W. C. Huang, J. L. Newstead, V. Pandey, Phys. Rev. D 106, 113006 (2022)*

*B. Dutta, W. C. Huang, J. L. Newstead, Phys. Rev. Lett. 131, 111801 (2023)*

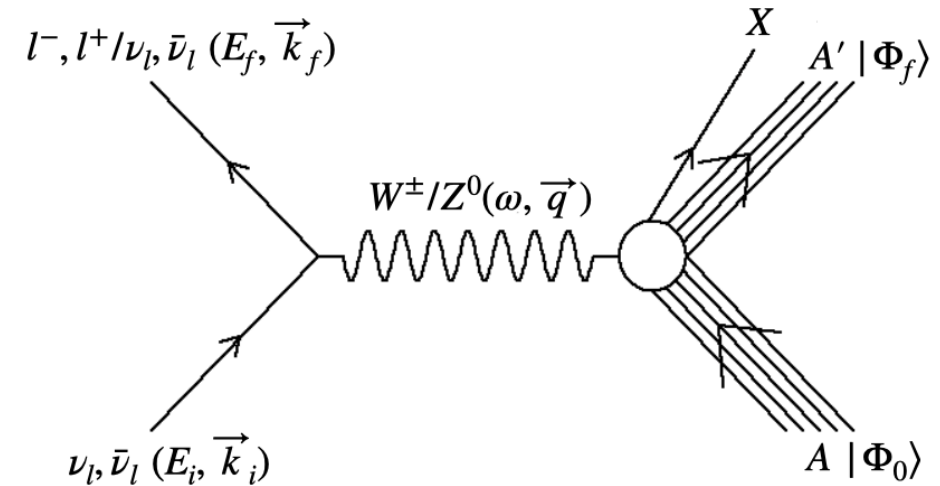
# 10s of MeV Inelastic Neutrino-Nucleus Scattering



piDAR and Supernova Neutrinos



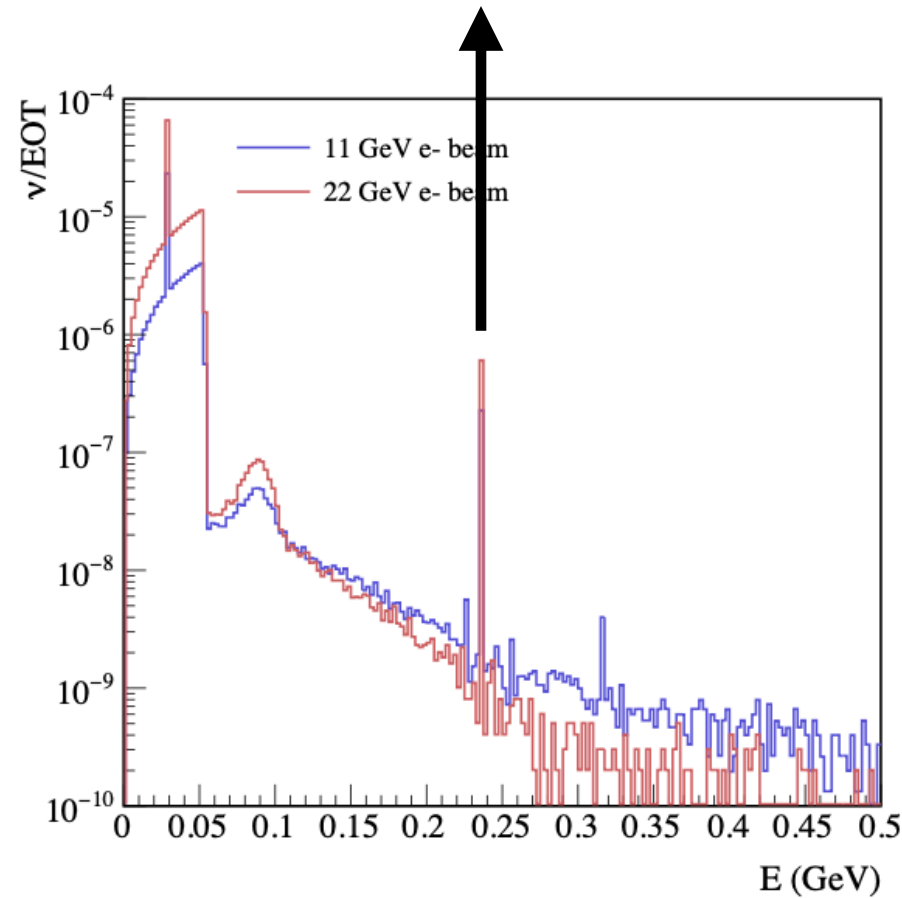
## Inelastic CC/NC



- Nuclear Structure Physics
- Supernova Neutrinos
- Complimentary New Physics signals
- .....

## Physics with KDAR Neutrinos

$$K^+ \rightarrow \mu^+ \nu_\mu$$
$$E_{\nu_\mu} = 236 \text{ MeV}$$

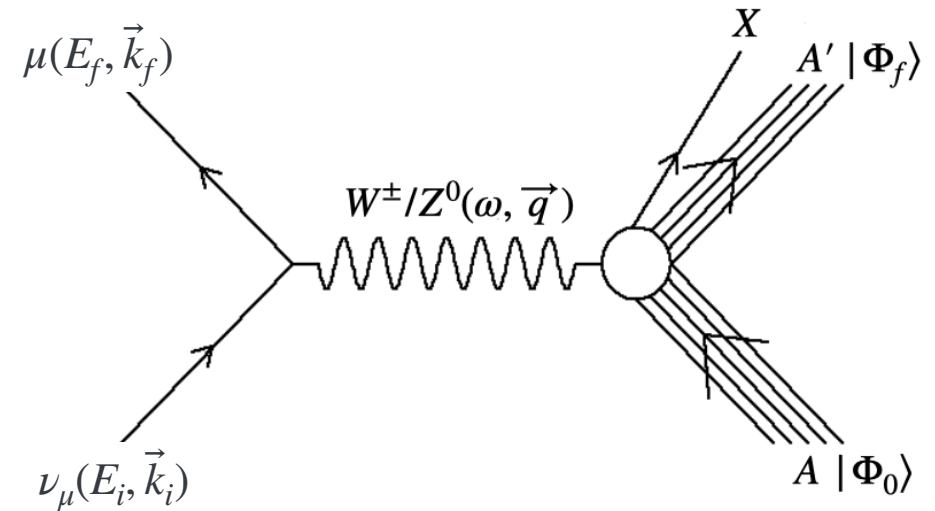
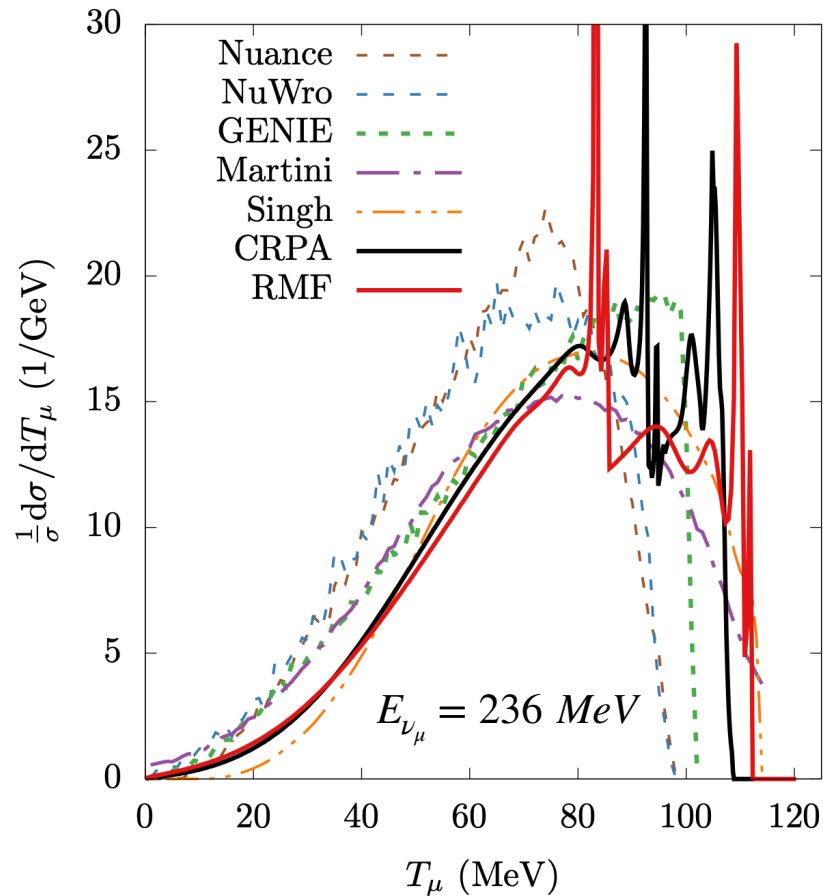


*M. Battaglieri et al., Instruments 8, 1 (2024)*



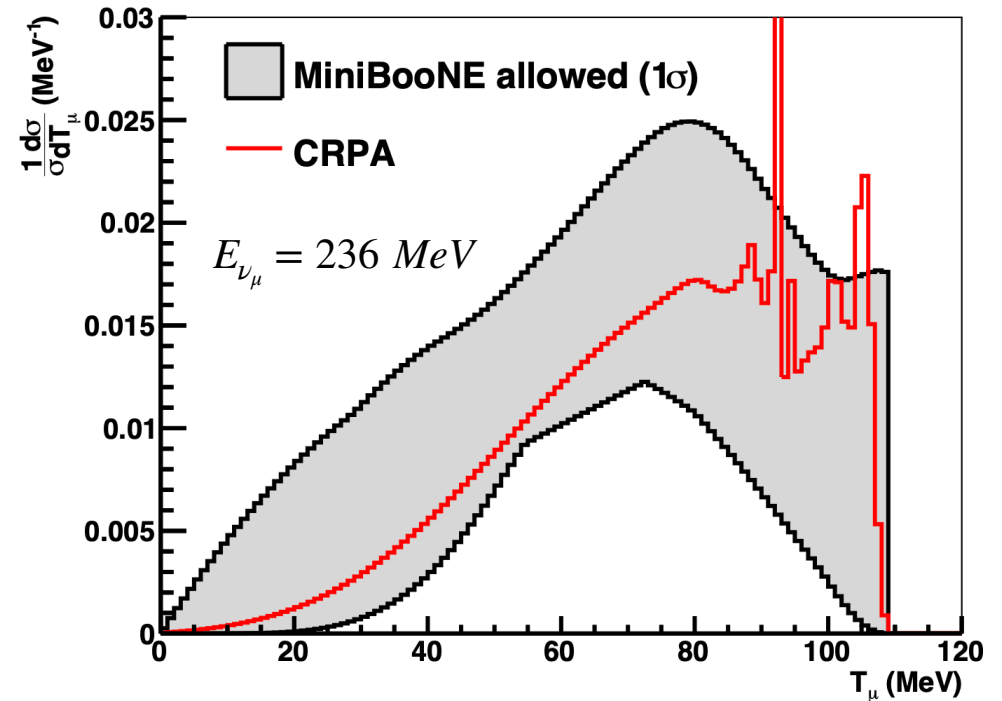
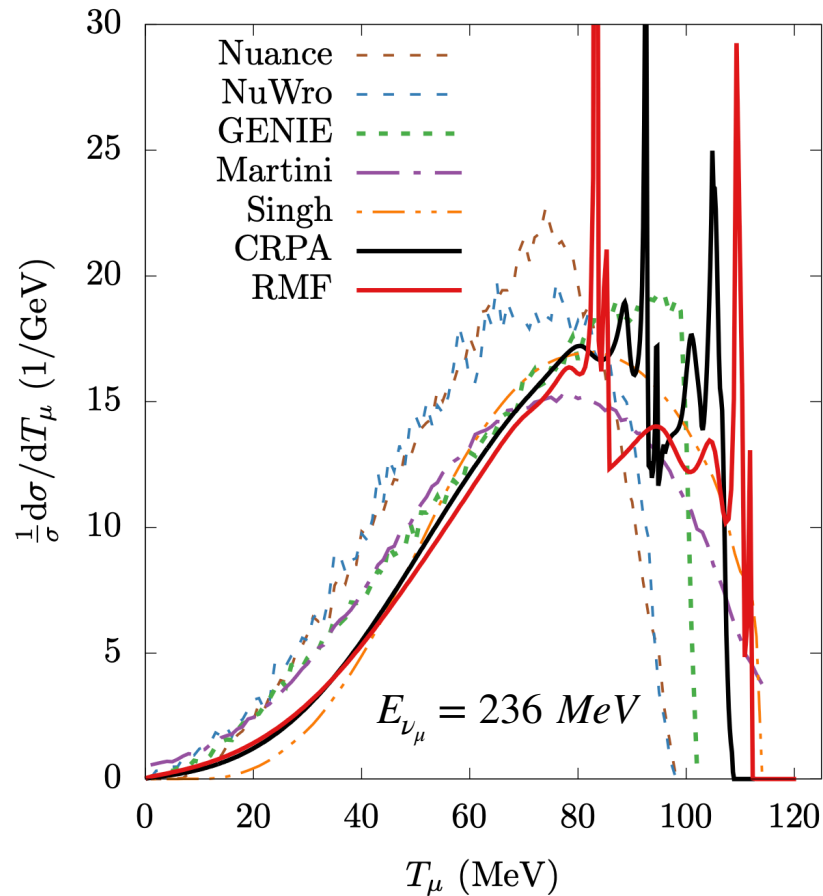
# KDAR Neutrino-Nucleus Scattering

- Interaction lies in the difficult-to-model transition region:  
between neutrino-on-nucleus and neutrino-on-(bound)nucleons scattering, in which the interaction evolves from inducing collective nuclear excitations among multiple nucleons to quasielastic scattering off of individual bound nucleon.



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MiniBooNE data: *Phys. Rev. Lett.* 120, 141802 (2018)

- Shape-only comparison of several models, too low statistics to discriminate between models

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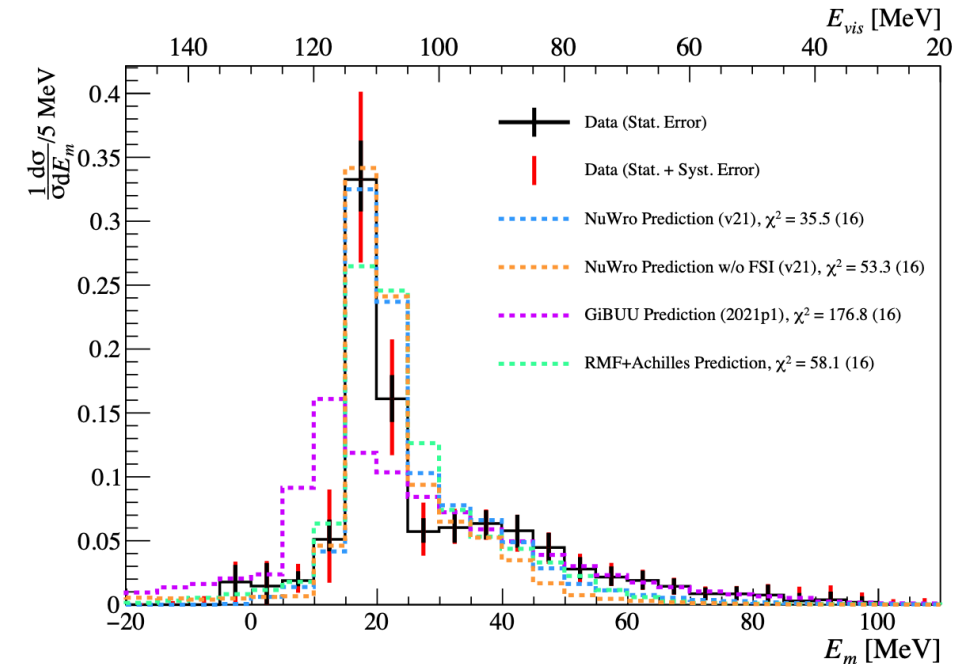


FIG. 4. The KDAR  $\nu_\mu$  CC missing energy,  $E_m$ , shape-only differential cross section measurement compared to several neutrino event generator/model predictions. The top x-axis provides the corresponding  $E_{vis}$  for each  $E_m$  value.

JSNS<sup>2</sup> Collaboration: [arXiv:2409.01383 \[hep-ex\]](https://arxiv.org/abs/2409.01383)

- New Measurement from JSNS<sup>2</sup> at JPARC.

# KDAR Physics Opportunities

- **Nuclear Physics**

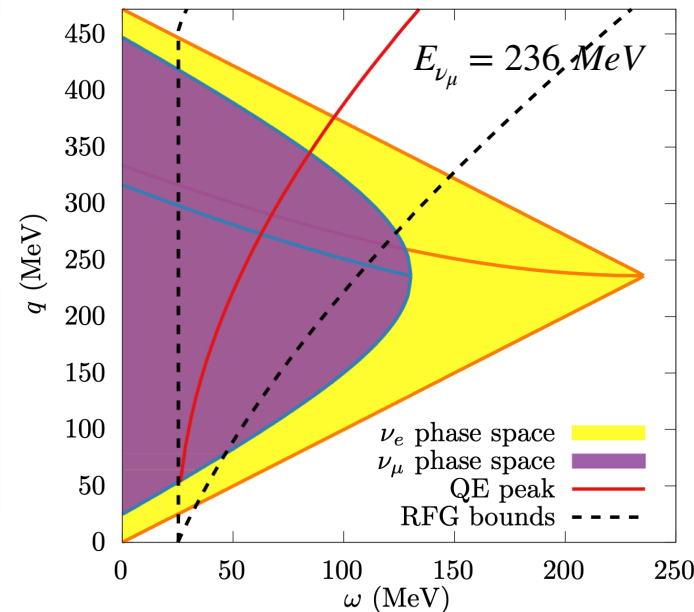
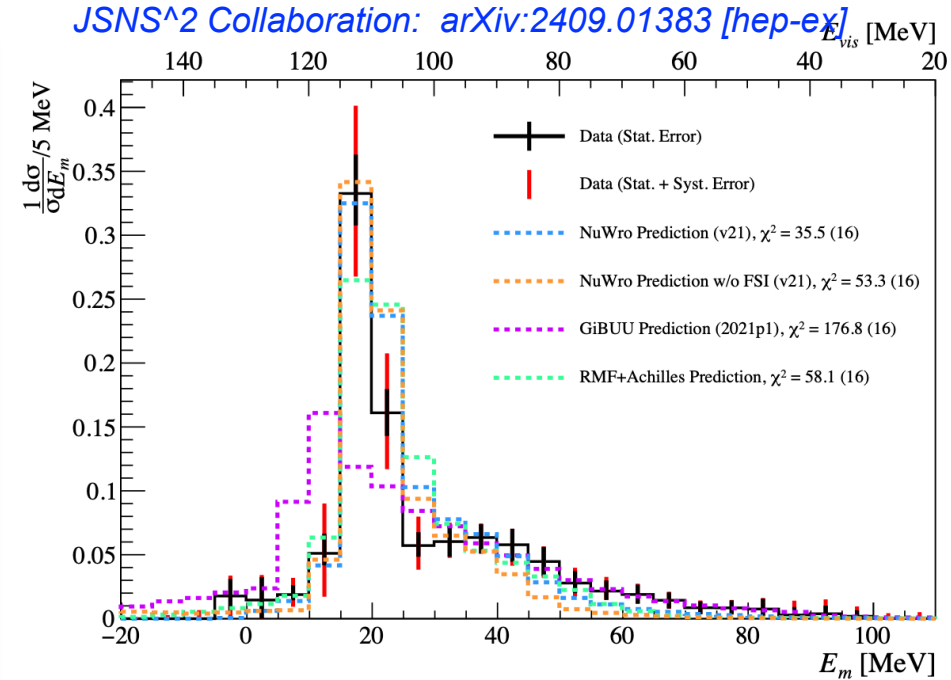
Study of nuclear effects and axial current with fixed neutrino energy

- **$\nu_\mu/\nu_e$  Ratio**

at lower energies, where the mass of the lepton in the final state affects the accessible phase space considerably

- **KDAR  $\nu_\mu \rightarrow \nu_e$  oscillations at short baselines**

- .....



A. Nikolakopoulos, V. Pandey,  
J. Spitz and N. Jachowicz,  
*Phys. Rev. C* 103, 064603 (2021)

# Summary

- Neutrinos from pion- and kaon-decay rest sources provide interesting avenues for studies of various nuclear, neutrino, BSM and astrophysical processes.
- Neutrino-nucleus interactions at these energies are sensitive to neutron radius and weak elastic form factor (CEvNS), and underlying nuclear structure and dynamics (inelastic).

# Summary

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- Neutrino-nucleus interactions at these energies are sensitive to neutron radius and weak elastic form factor (CEvNS), and underlying nuclear structure and dynamics (inelastic).
- In general, an electron beam dump produces far fewer neutrinos than a proton beam dump. It is worth exploring the competitiveness and complementarity of the (piDAR and KDAR) neutrino flux at BDX at JLab compared to other sources worldwide

**Table 2.** Summary of JLab secondary neutrino beam features. Yields are obtained integrating the neutrino flux in the energy range 0–500 MeV.

Beam Energy	Off-Axis Flux [ $\nu/\text{EOT}/\text{m}^2$ ]	On-Axis Flux [ $\nu/\text{EOT}/\text{m}^2$ ]
11 GeV	$6.7 \times 10^{-5}$	$2.9 \times 10^{-5}$
22 GeV	$1.9 \times 10^{-4}$	$6.3 \times 10^{-5}$

*“... when integrated over a  $1 \text{ m}^2$  detector located 10 m above (downstream) of the beam dump. Considering a delivered charge of  $10^{22}$  EOT per year, the annual neutrino flux would be in the range of  $10^{18}$   $\nu$ .”*

*M. Battaglieri et al., Instruments 8, 1 (2024)*

