AEPHY: Nuclear Physics Practise Test

Name: _____   (63 marks + overall = 64 marks)

OVERALL: Additional 1 mark for units and significant figures.

1. Complete the table below: (2 marks)

Element	Nuclide	Atomic Number	Number of Neutrons	Mass Number
Nitrogen - 14	$^{14}_{7}\text{N}$	7		
		2	2	
	$^{14}_{6}\text{C}$	6		14

2. Fully explain what an isotope is using examples. (3 marks) _____

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3. For each of the following, name the radiation emitted, its symbol and what the radiation is and what will stop it. (3 marks)

Nuclear Equation	Nuclide	Radiation name	Symbol	What is the radiation made of?
$^{234}_{90}\text{Th} \rightarrow {}^{234}_{91}\text{Pa} + ?$				
$^{137m}_{56}\text{Ba} \rightarrow {}^{137}_{56}\text{Ba} + ?$				
$^{238}_{92}\text{U} \rightarrow {}^{234}_{90}\text{Th} + ?$				

4. A radiographer wants to investigate blood circulation in a patient. There are a number of radioisotopes available. What properties would you look for to select one? Give three reasons.

(3 marks)

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5. Within a nuclear reactor, uranium-235 is bombarded by a neutron to split into two daughter products also emitting three neutrons. Part of the nuclear equation is shown below.

$$^{235}_{92}U + ^{1}_{0}n \rightarrow X + ^{94}_{38}Sr + 3\,^{1}_{0}n$$
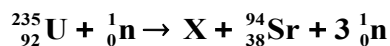
a. Write the nuclide for the missing daughter product labelled X. _____ (1 mark)

b. What is the atomic and mass numbers of the daughter product X:

Mass no. _____ (1 mark)   Atomic no. _____ (1 mark)

6. A physics student has three radioactive sources, X, Y and Z. One is a pure α emitter, one is a pure β emitter and one is a pure γ emitter. He uses the following apparatus to decide which is which. The apparatus consists of a holder for the source, a sheet of thin aluminium foil placed in front of the source, a region of electric field directed down the page, and three detectors, 1, *2* and 3, arranged as shown below. The student is also told that charged particles will be deflected to the left or to the right when passing through an electric field.
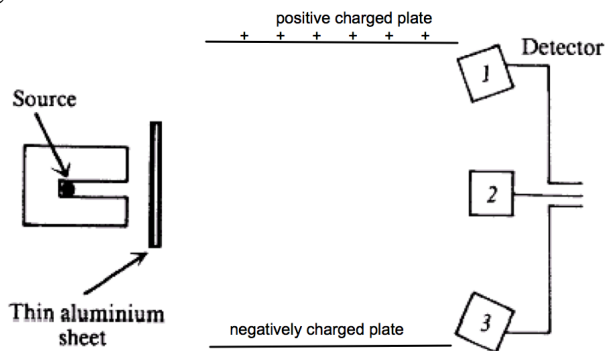

With source X there is no signal from any detector. With source Y there is a signal from detector *3* only. With source Z there is a signal from detector *2* only.

a. Which source (X, Y or Z) is the β emitter? (1 mark) _____

b. Which source (X, Y or Z) is the α emitter? (1 mark) _____

c. Which detector (1, 2 or 3) would most likely detect γ radiation? (1 mark) _____

7. A student is measuring the decay of a nuclear source. She finds that the source has a count of 8.30×10^3 decays in a one hour period. Calculate the activity of the source.   (2 marks)

8. The forming of a new element during radioactive decay is called transmutation. Explain why emitting alpha and beta radiation causes a transmutation but emitting gamma radiation does not.
(3 marks)

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9. From the graph, determine the half life of the radioactive isotope.   (1 mark)
   Show on the graph how you did this.   (1 mark)

Half-life of a radioactive isotope
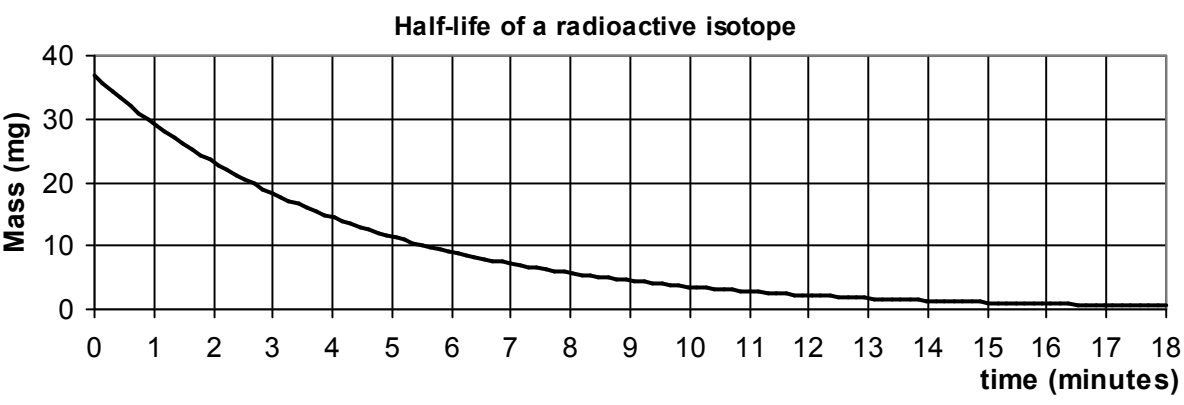
Half-life = _____

10. In the following reaction $^{212}_{84}Po \rightarrow X +$ an α particle; the nuclide X is: (1 mark)

A. $^{212}_{80}Hg$ B. $^{210}_{80}Hg$ C. $^{210}_{82}Pb$ D. $^{208}_{82}Pb$ E. $^{212}_{82}Pb$

Answer: _____

11. If a radioactive sample has a half-life of 1.50 hours. If the activity of the sample was originally
    15.0 kBq, what would the activity be exactly one day later? (2 marks)

12. The radio isotope $^{60}_{24}Co$ has a half-life of approximately 5.00 years. Gamma radiation from a
    $^{60}_{24}Co$ source is used to treat cancer.   Hospitals using such sources for therapy usually replace the
    source when its activity has fallen to 25% of its original value. After how many years must a
    source be replaced? All working must be shown. (2 marks)

13. Household smoke detectors contain a radioactive Americium-241 source. Emitted radiation ionizes air inside a chamber that allows a small current to flow. Smoke particles entering the chamber interrupt the current flow, which sets off the alarm. Americium-241 is an α emitter with a half life of 433 years.

    a. Using the information above, briefly discuss why $^{241}_{95}\text{Am}$ is ideal for use in smoke detectors.

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    _____(2 marks)

    b. What would you say to a person who is anxious about having a smoke detector containing a radiation source in their home? (2 marks)

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14. In terms of their properties, explain why alpha radiation cannot penetrate paper but beta radiation can.

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15. In the chain of decays that lead from $^{214}_{83}\text{Bi}$ to a stable $^{A}_{Z}\text{X}$, one α particle, one β particle and 2γ rays are emitted. What are the values of Z and A for nucleus X? (2 marks)

Z: _____   A: _____

16. A factory has a number of underground water pipes. Pressure from one outlet clearly indicates that somewhere in the system is a water leak. It would be very expensive to dig up the thick concrete factory floor to find the leak. Explain how you could use a radioactive source to find the leak in the underground system of pipes. Include in your explanation what type of radioactive emission you would use and why. (3 marks)

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17.   If the original activity of a sample is 42.0 kBq and it has a half-life of 4.00 days, how much will be left after 16.0 days? (2 marks)

18. The half-life of Iodine-131 is 8.00 hours. If the activity of a sample is 416 kBq, how long will it take to fall to 104 kBq? (2 marks)

Radioactive decay of a substance

19. Determine the half-life of the substance from the graph. (1 marks)

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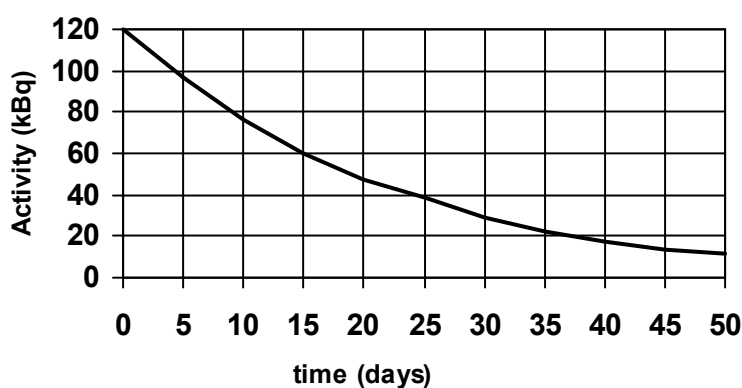
20. Food can be preserved by irradiating it with nuclear gamma radiation. Meat typically requires an equivalent dose of 1000 Sv to sterilize it. How much energy does 2.0 kg of meat absorb when it undergoes sterilization? (2 marks)

21. Using an example, explain the term radioisotope.   (2 marks)

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22. A radiation source and a detector can be used to measure the thickness of very thin aluminum cooking foil during manufacture. Select, from the chart below, a suitable radioisotope to be used as a radiation source.

RADIOISOTOPE	MOST USEFUL RADIATION EMITTED	HALF-LIFE
Americium-241	alpha	432 years
Cesium-137	gamma	30 years
Cobalt-60	gamma	5.27 days
Iodine-131	beta	8.04 days
Radium-223	alpha	11.4 years
Strontium-90	beta	29 years

Choice: _____ (1 mark)

Reason for choice: _____

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_____ (3 marks)

Read the article then answer the questions that follow.

New Scientist in April 1991.

Long Wait Ends For Medical Cyclotron

More than 20 years after it was first proposed, Australia's first medical cyclotron was installed this month at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney.

The opening of the cyclotron ends many years of dispute as to where it should be sited. It took the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) a long time to convince the government that the equipment should be located at a hospital and not with the research reactor at Lucas Heights in Sydney's southern suburbs. Rex Boyd, director of the cyclotron project, says U.S. experience showed that doctors would not send seriously ill patients to a facility away from a major hospital.

By September, the National Medical Cyclotron will be cranking out radioisotopes for use in the hospital's new positron emission tomography (PET) centre, which is expected to cater for about 1000 patients a year. PET scans help doctors to diagnose heart disease, cancer, and numerous brain disorders such as Alzheimer's disease and epilepsy.

It will produce radioisotopes previously unavailable in Australia, the most important of which are carbon-11, nitrogen-13, oxygen-15 and fluorine-18. These isotopes are useful only for short periods of time before they break apart, which is why scientists and clinicians cannot simply import them form abroad.

(A radioisotope is a radioactive form of an element which differs in mass from the more stable form. Radioisotopes break up spontaneously emitting high energy particles. They can be used medically as tracers and for measuring concentrations of substances.)

According to Boyd, the A$22 million cyclotron - made in Belgium by Ion Beam Applications (IBA) can produce a wide variety of radioisotopes because it can accelerate either protons or deuterons. The radioisotopes are created when those particles strike a specially prepared target at high velocity. The isotopes then travel down two "beam lines" from the cyclotron to a laboratory where they are purified and turned into biologically active radio-pharmaceuticals.

It is hoped that the sale of longer-lived radioisotopes will cover the facility's annual A$3 million operating cost. IBA is also supplying a much smaller machine to the Austin Hospital in Melbourne. The mini-accelerator, as it is called, will produce radioisotopes for PET applications alone.

Leigh Dayton,   Sydney.

23. One of the radioisotopes which will be produced by the cyclotron is nitrogen -13. With reference to the article, explain what happens in the cyclotron to produce the nitrogen-13. (2 mark)

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24. a. What reason is given for Australia not importing supplies of fluorine-18 and oxygen-15 for
example? Explain. (2 mark)

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b. An important medical tracer which is currently produced at Lucas Heights is technetium-99. Tc-99
has a half-life of 6.00 hours. If a 20.0 g sample of Tc-99 is produced at 6.00 am, what mass will
still be active at 6.00 am the next day? (2 mark)

25. All the major diagnostic hospitals around Australia use Tc-99. Supplies are dispatched from Lucas
Heights to all capital cities every 3 days or so. However, it is not Tc-99 which is sent but
molybdenum-99 instead. Mo-99, which has a half-life of 72 hours, produces Tc-99. The Tc-99 is
then withdrawn by the doctors as required.

a. (i) Complete the nuclear equation to show the missing particle. (1 mark)

$$_{42}^{99}\text{Mo} \rightarrow {}_{43}^{99}\text{Tc} \ + $$
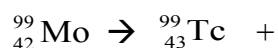
(ii) What type of radiation is this? _____ (1 mark)

b. Explain the advantage of sending Mo-99 instead of Tc-99. (2 marks)

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