

# Applications of Radiation

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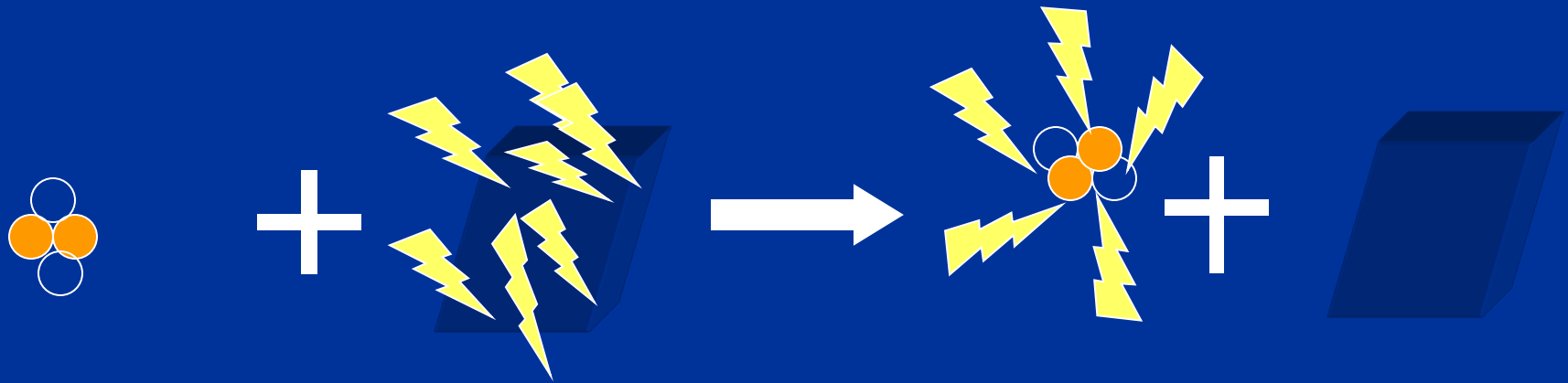
PSU Milton S. Hershey Medical  
Center

# Overview

- General applications by radiation type
- Radiography - process
- Medical Research
- Medical Applications
- Space

# Alpha Radiation $\alpha$

- Highly ionizing
- Removes Static Charge



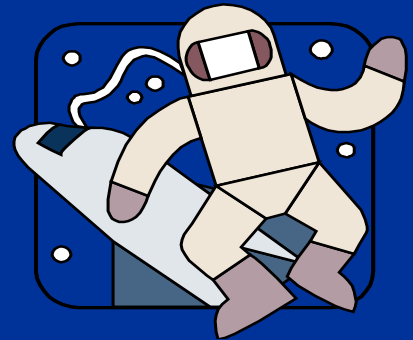
Alpha Particle



Static Charge

# Uses of Alpha Radiation

- Pacemakers (Older models)



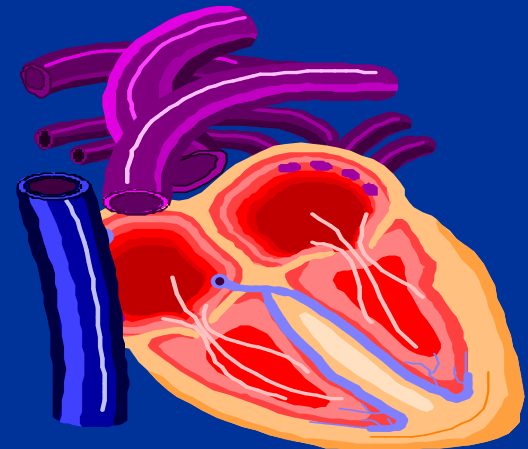
- Airplanes

- Copy Machines



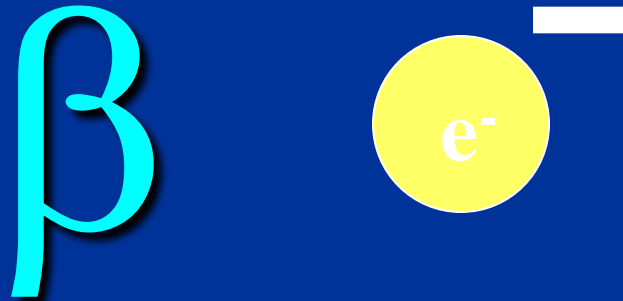
- Smoke Detectors

- Space exploration

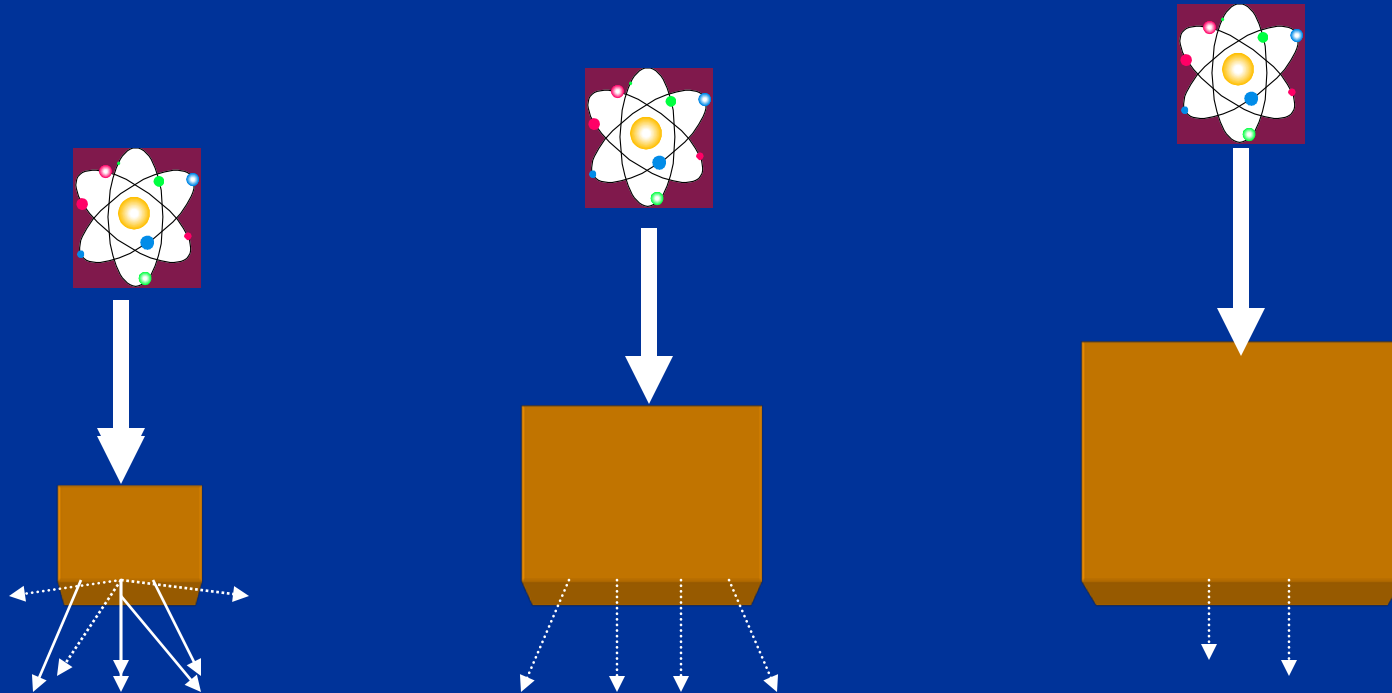


# Beta Radiation

- Small electron particle
- More penetrating than alpha



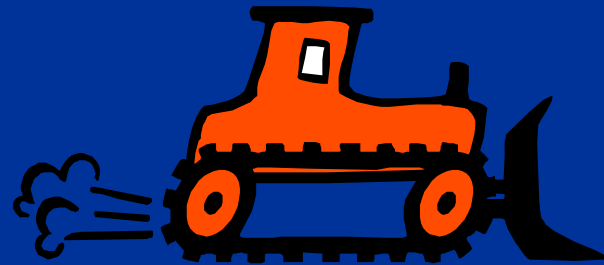
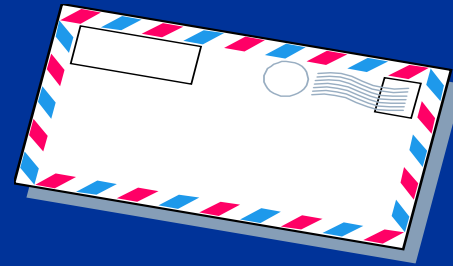
# Beta Radiation is used in thickness gauging



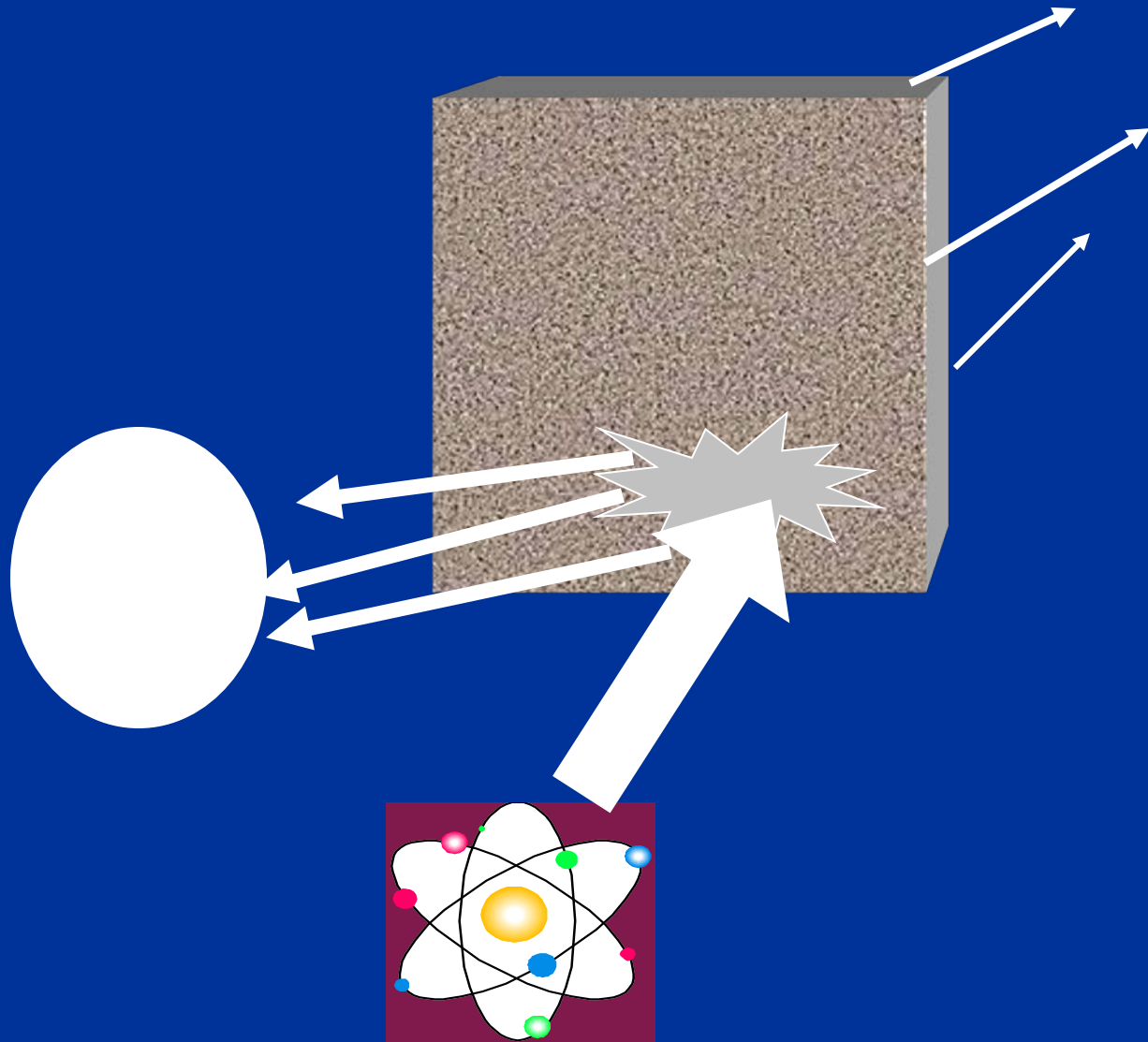
The thicker the material the less radiation will pass through the material.

# Gauging is used to:

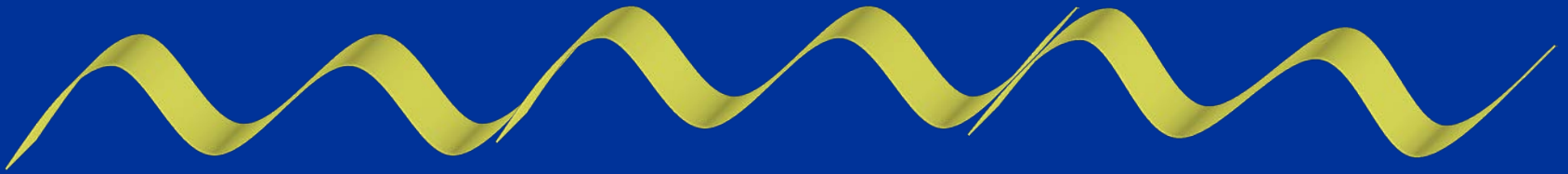
- Measure and control thickness of paper, plastic, and aluminum.
- Measure the amount of glue placed on a postage stamp
- Measure the amount of air whipped into ice cream.
- Measure the density of the road during construction.



# Back Scattering



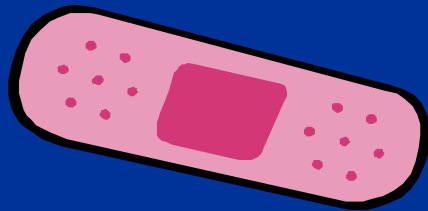
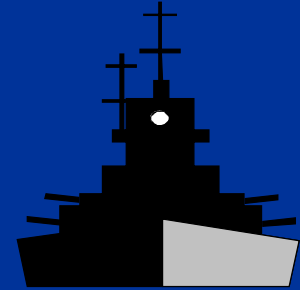
# Gamma Radiation $\gamma$



A penetrating wave

# Uses for Gamma radiation

- Food irradiation
- Sterilization of medical equipment
- Creation of different varieties of flowers
- Inspect bridges, vessel welds and Statue Of Liberty.



# What were original uses of mysterious rays?

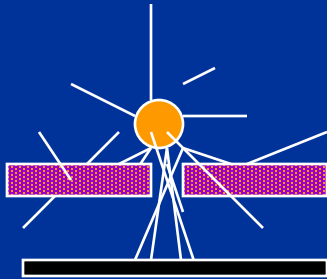
- Becquerel's discovery
- Roentgen X-ray of Wife's hand
- Marie Curie – WWI – x-ray unit



# Early X-ray

<http://www.uihealthcare.com/depts/medmuseum/galleryexhibits/collectingfrompast/xray/xray.html>

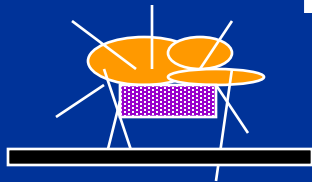
# Radiographs



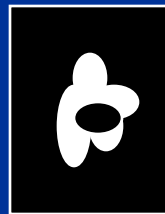
**X-ray**



- Radiograph - radiation energy passes through object

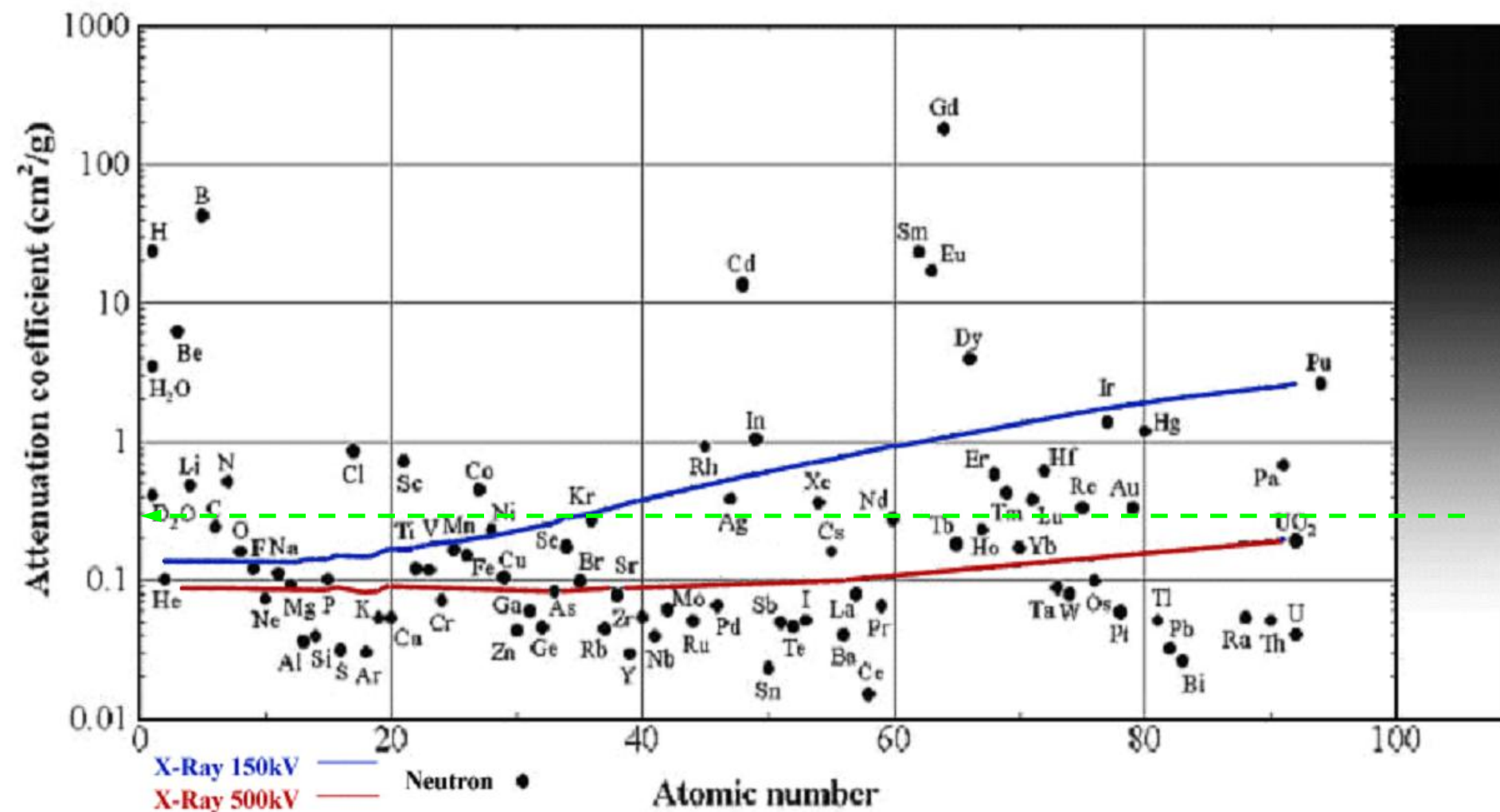


**Photo-Film**



- Autoradiograph - use radiation from object itself

# Thermal neutron and X-ray mass attenuation coefficients for the elements

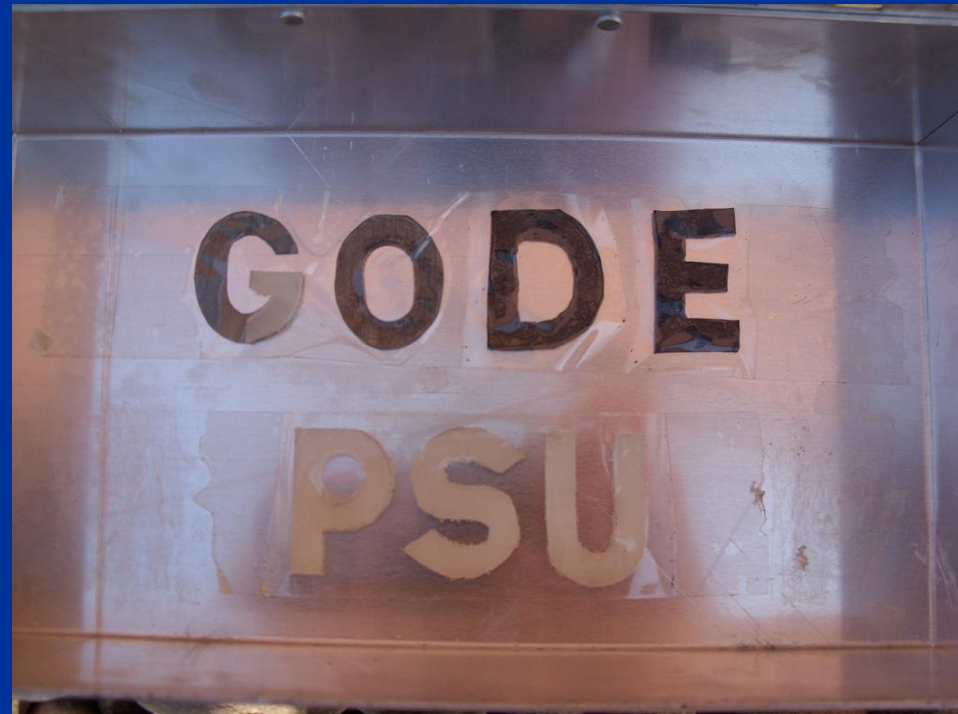
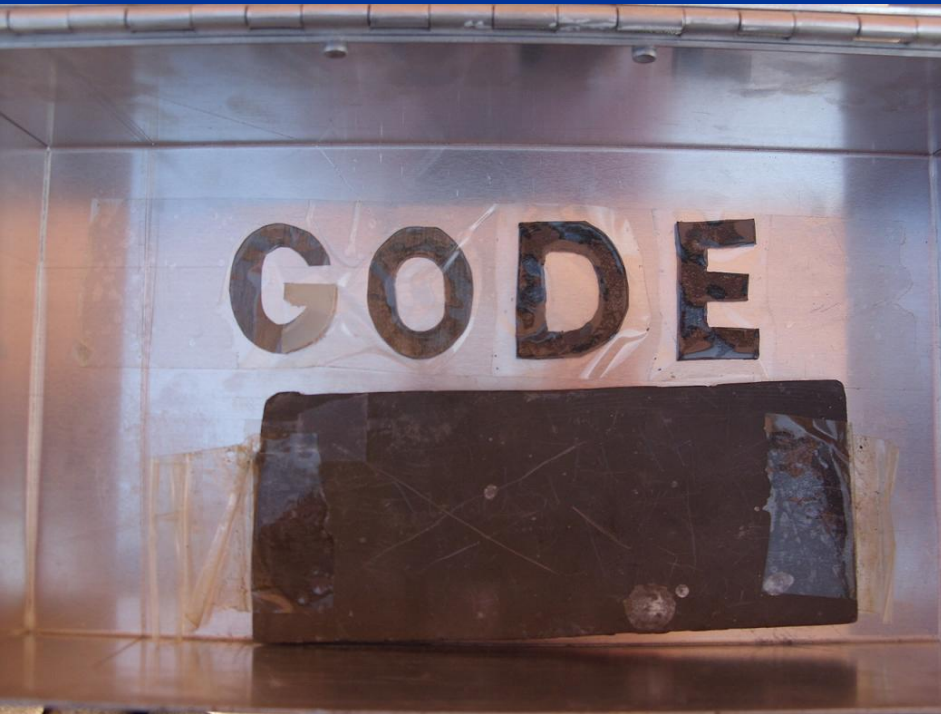


# Compare Different Materials

- Cadmium ( Cd )
- Lead ( Pb )
- Polyethylene (  $(\text{CH}_2)_n$  )

# CODE Box

Student Project to Demonstrate X-Ray/Neutron Radiography



Was originally in cardboard shoe box, but was replaced by more durable aluminum.

Cadmium

Lead

CODE



# X-Ray Image

CODE



Cadmium

Lead

Polyethylene

CODE



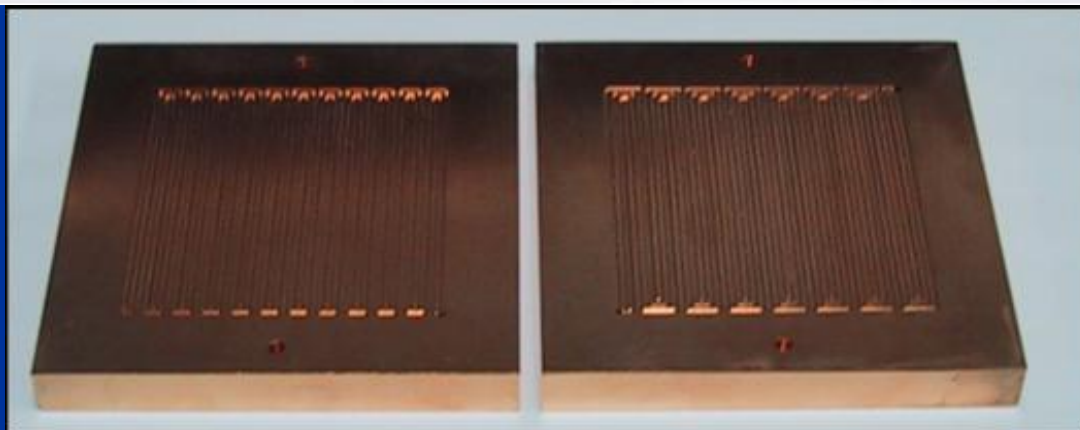
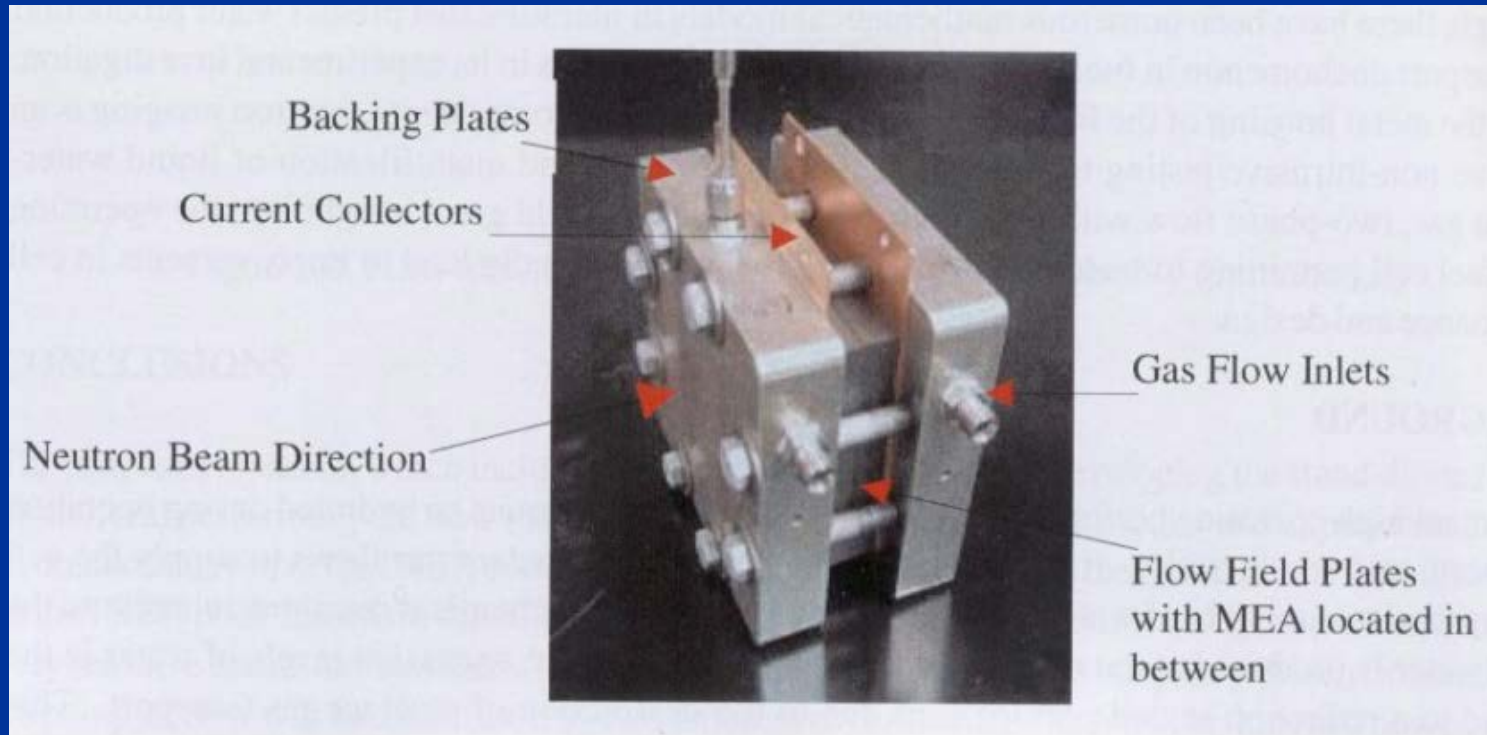
# Neutron Radiograph

**GO**

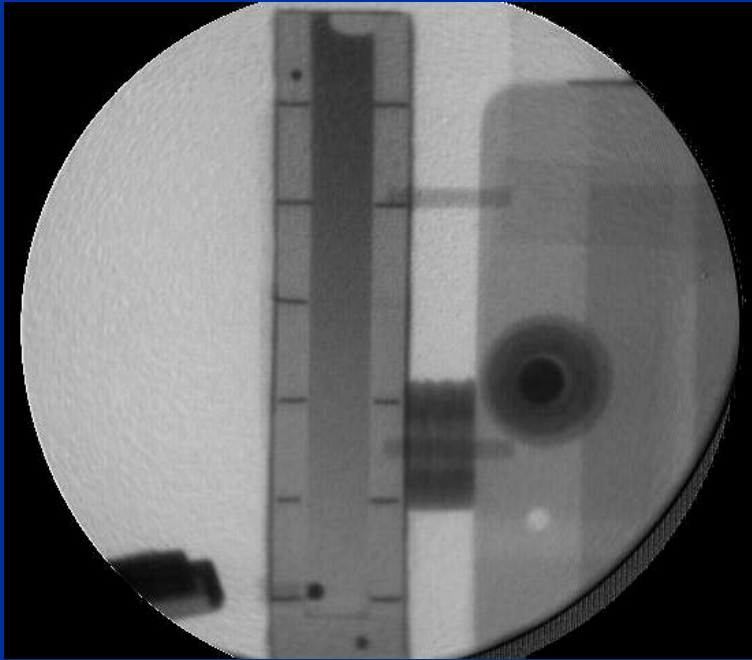
**DE**

**PSU**

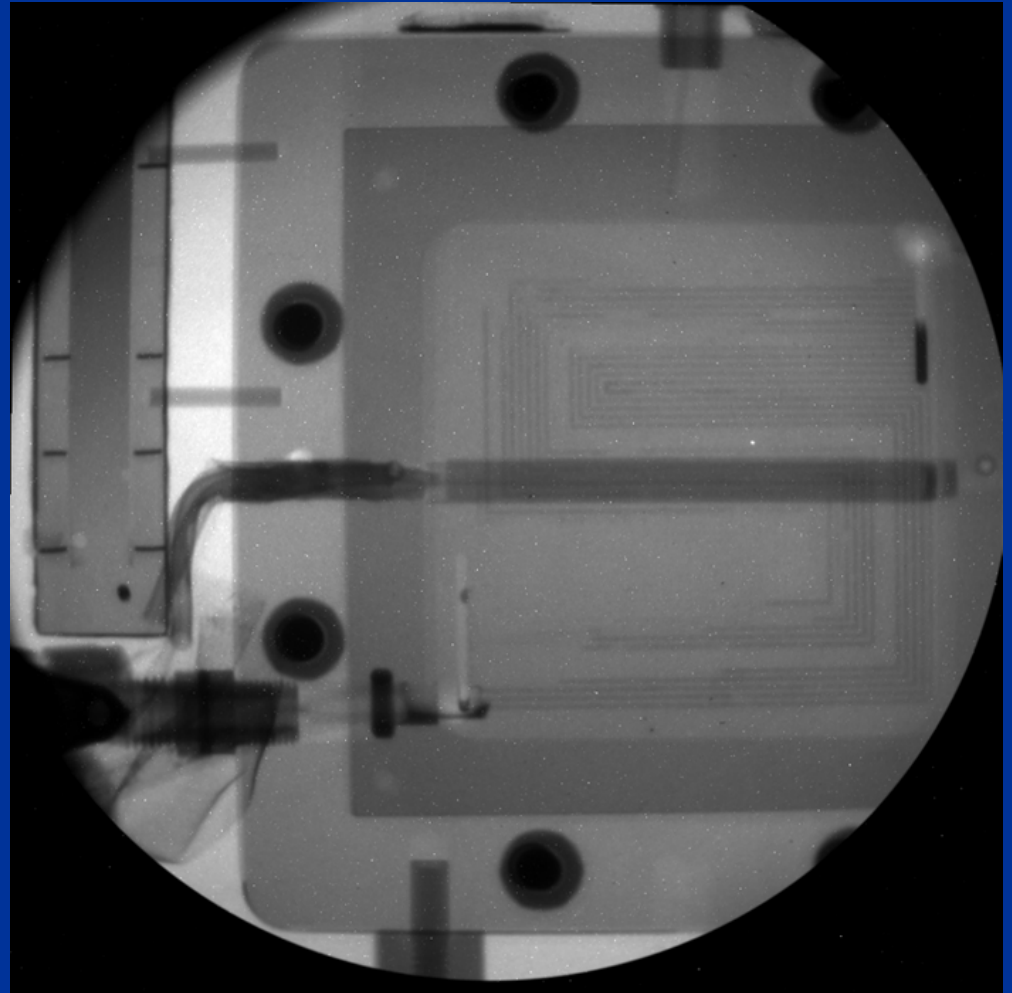
# Hydrogen Fuel Cell Imaging



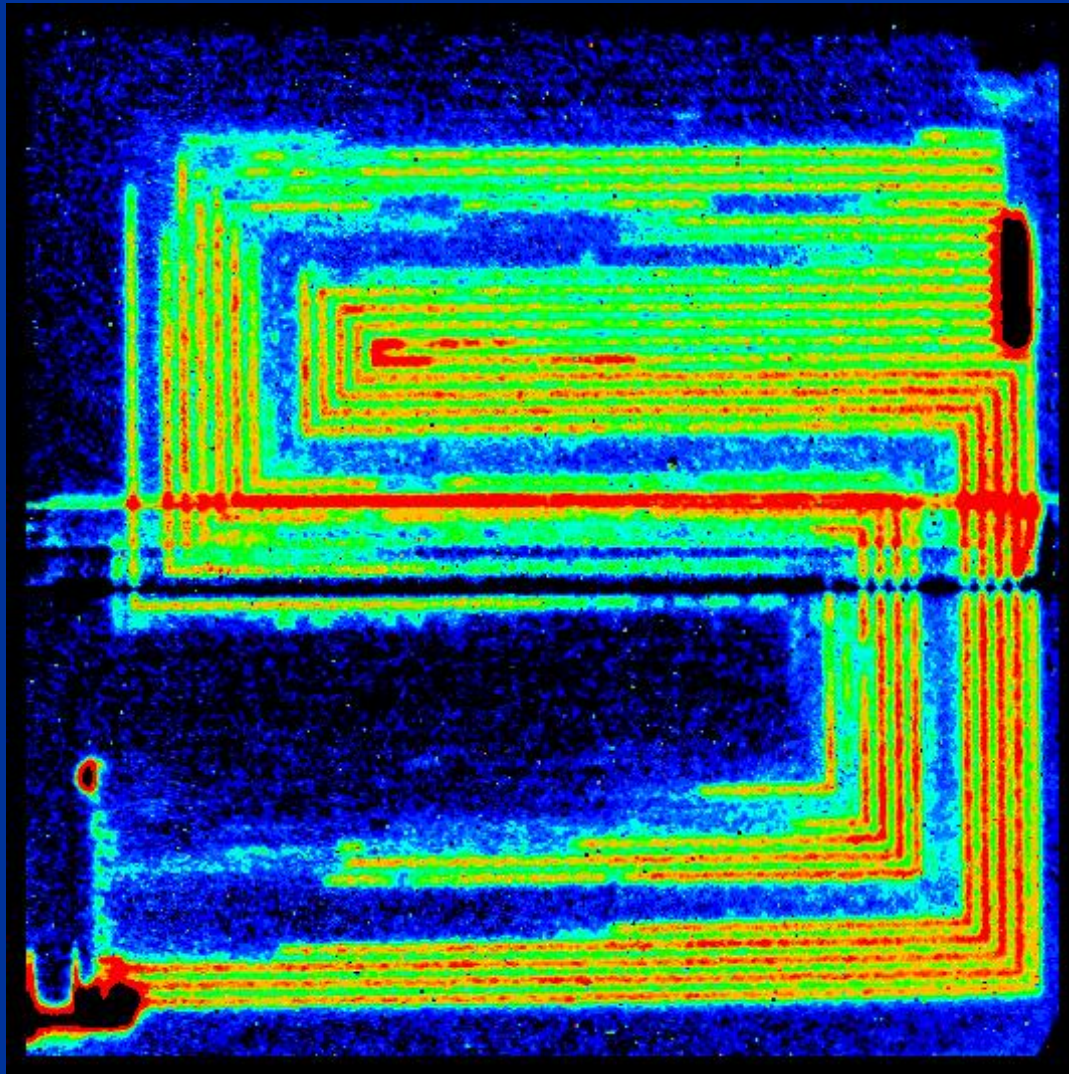
# Hydrogen Fuel Cell Imaging



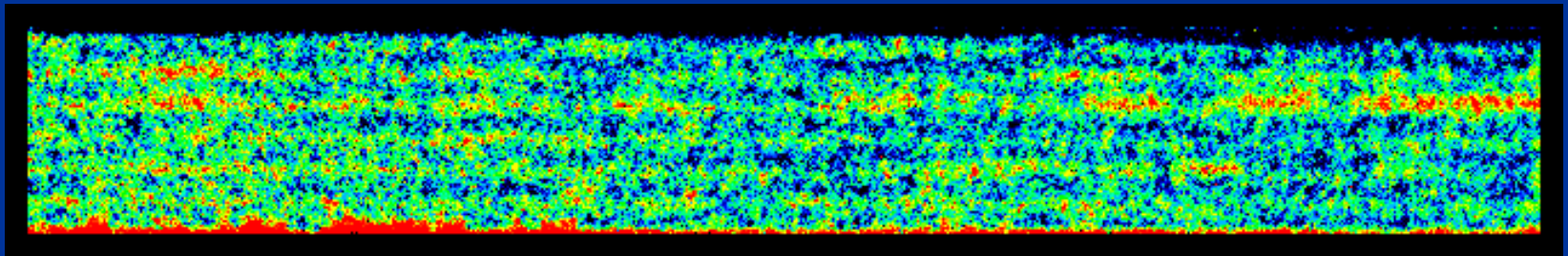
Water Calibration Wedge



# Hydrogen Fuel Cell Imaging

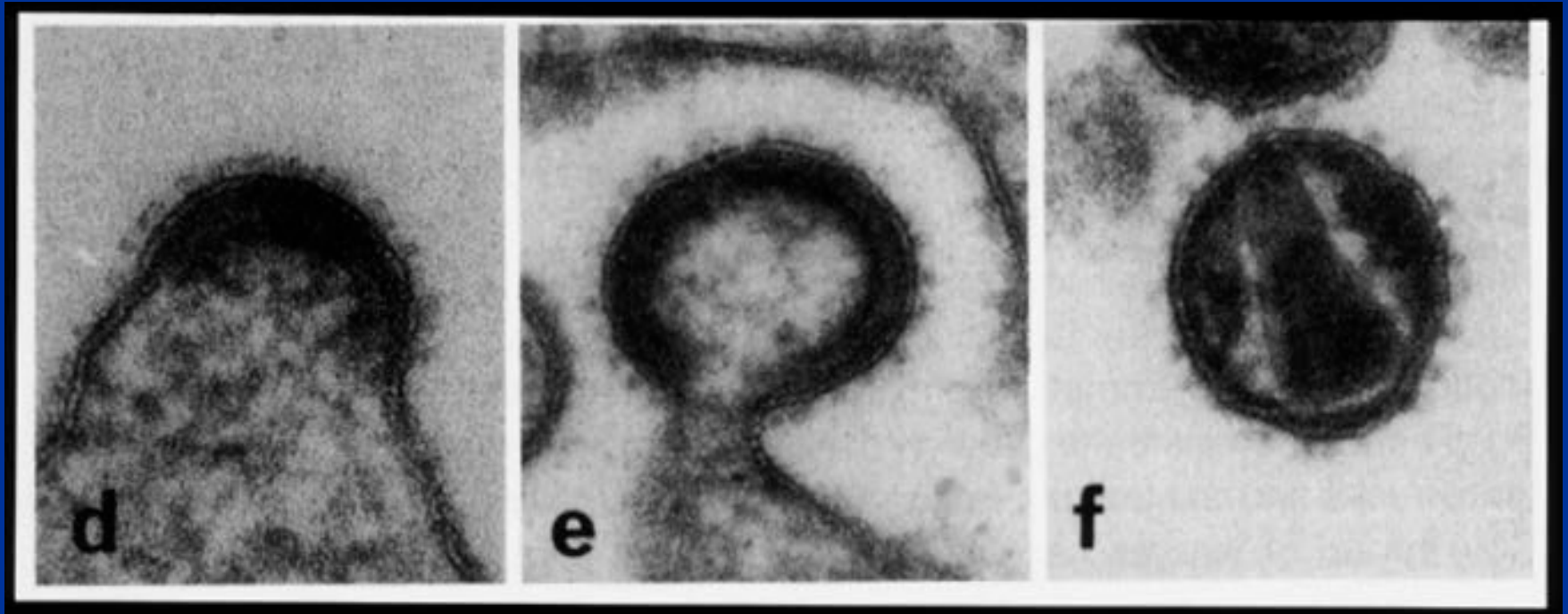


# Hydrogen Fuel Cell Imaging



# Clinical Uses of Radioactive Materials

# Understanding the Replication Process of the HIV Retrovirus

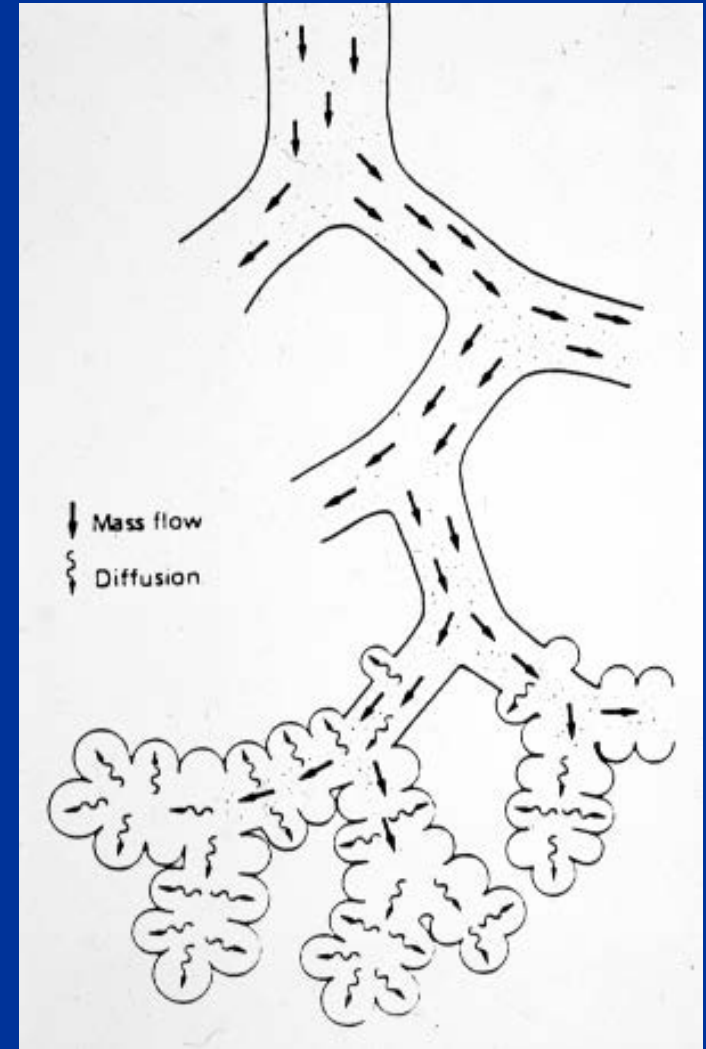


- DNA sequencing, using  $^{35}\text{S}$  and  $^{32}\text{P}$ , is used to investigate the process by which new viruses “bud” or form from host cells

# 5000 Premature Infants Die Annually from Respiratory Distress/SIDS



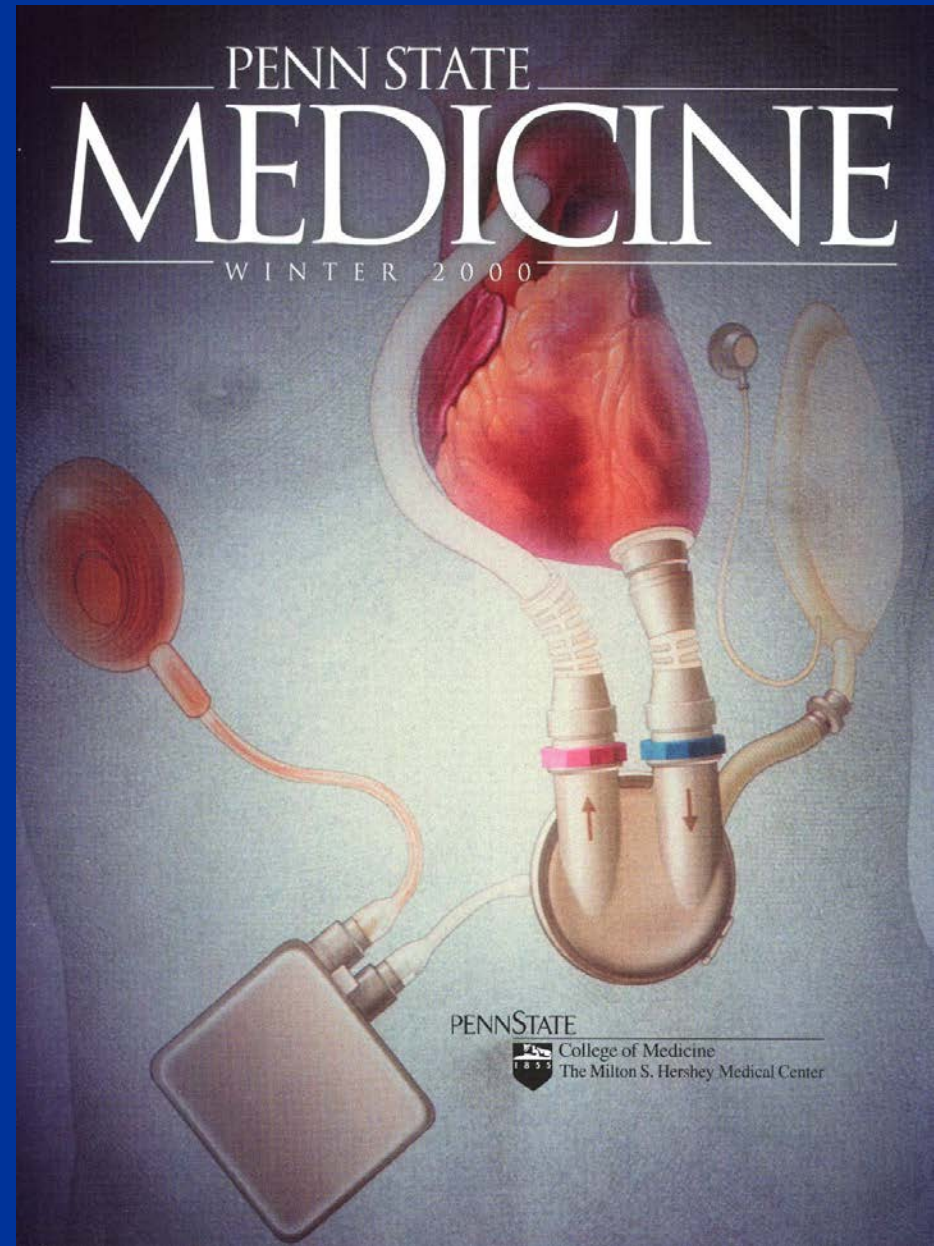
- The infant lacks a protein which produces a surfactant in the lung alveoli
- Without the surfactant, there is too much surface tension – the lung is too weak to expand. A respirator is needed.
- $^{32}\text{P}$ -research identified the missing protein
- Gene therapy may one day be available



# Benefits from Radioisotope Research



The Penn State Artificial Heart



# RIA (Radio Immuno Assay)

- Extremely sensitive test for the presence of radiolabeled antibodies in blood serum samples
- Dr. Rosalyn Yalow developed the technique ca. 1961, won 1977 Nobel Prize
- Many tests exist for:
  - Adrenal Function
  - Anemia
  - Diabetes - Related
  - Drugs of Abuse
  - Newborn Screening
  - Reproductive Hormones
  - Therapeutic Drugs
  - Thyroid Function
  - Tumor Markers
  - Veterinary Tests

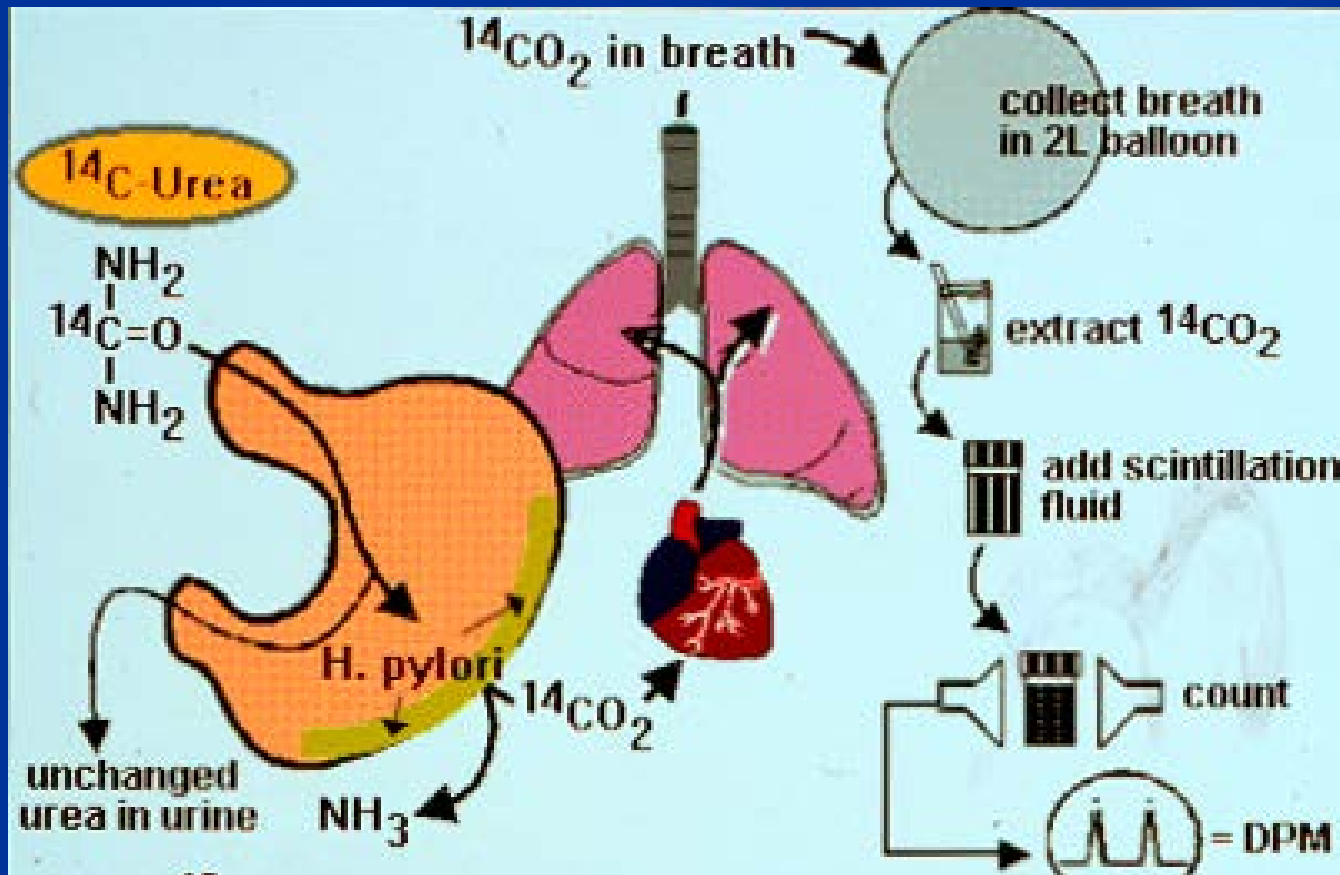
# RIA Kit

- A standard test kit includes reagents, antigens, and a minute amount of radioactivity
- One kit can be used to test 100 to 500 patient serum samples



# $^{14}\text{C}$ Test for *Helicobacter pylori*

- *H. pylori* is often implicated in Gastric Reflux Disease
- If present, a specific antibiotic can be prescribed to eliminate it
- The use of radioactive  $^{14}\text{C}$  provides a simple and sure test



# $^{137}\text{Cs}$ Blood Irradiator



- Delivers 2500 rads to blood products
- Reduces potential for Graft-vs-Host Disease
- Essential for bone marrow transplants

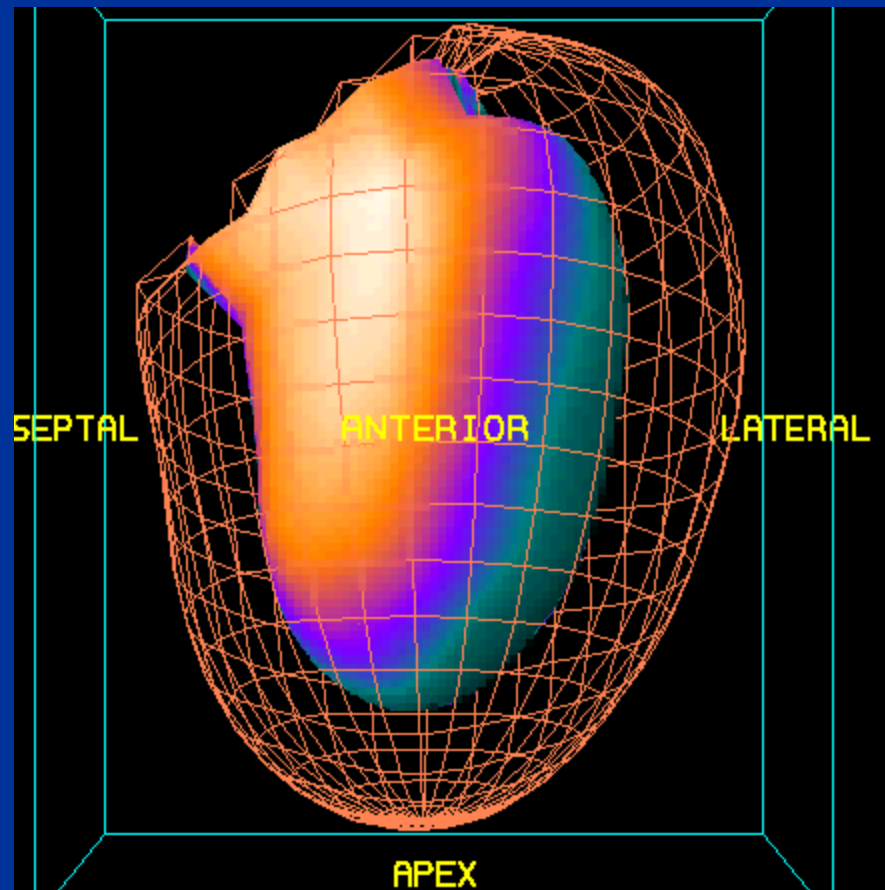


# Diagnostic Radiology Modalities

- X-Ray (Roentgenology)
  - Radiography
  - Fluoroscopy
  - CT (Computed Tomography)
  - Interventional Radiology
    - Angiography
    - Cardiac Catheterization
    - Neuro-Interventional

# Heart Image

- Gated study of radiolabeled cardiac muscle
- Allows visualization of heart tissue viability



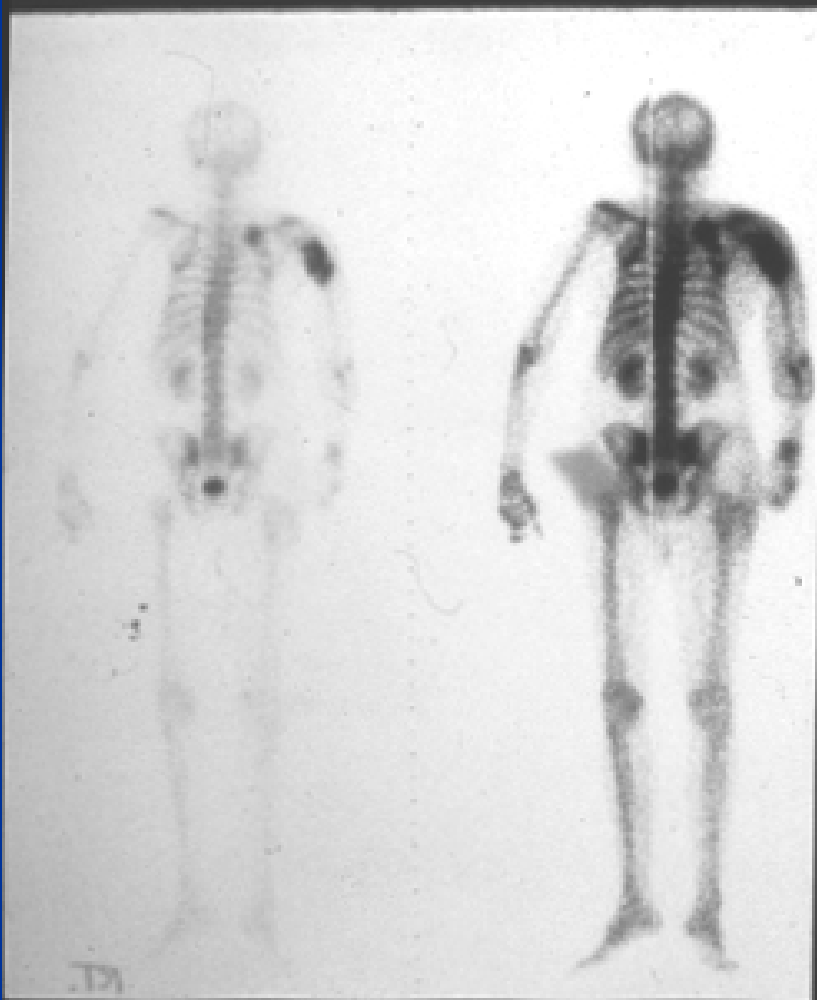
# Bone Scan with $^{99m}\text{Tc}$ -HDP

- Active bone surface is labeled
- Note “hot spots” and kidneys

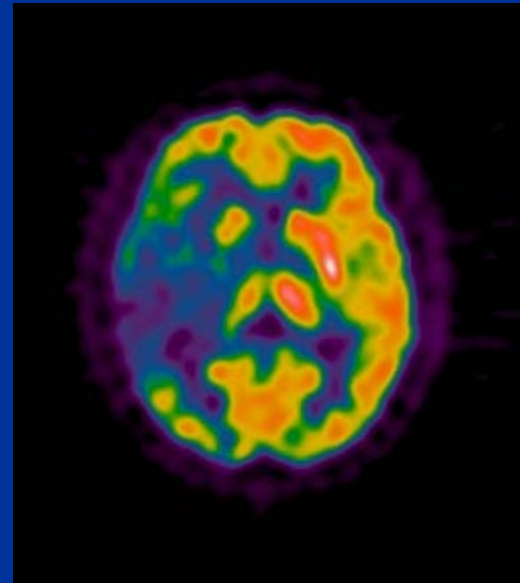
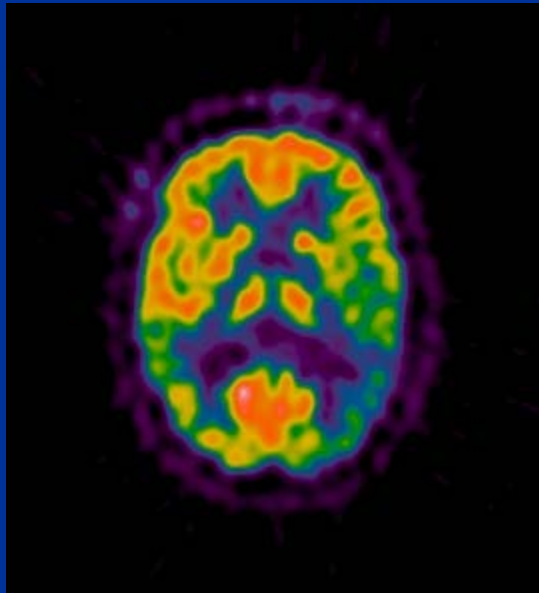


# Nuc Med & Radiographic Images Compared

- Metabolic hotspots highlighted  
– possibly cancerous
- X-ray image shows break,  
but no metabolic information



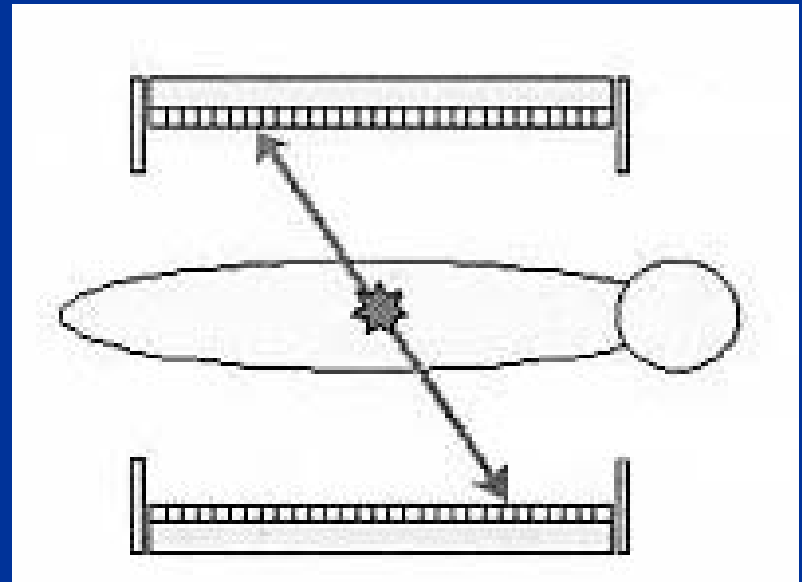
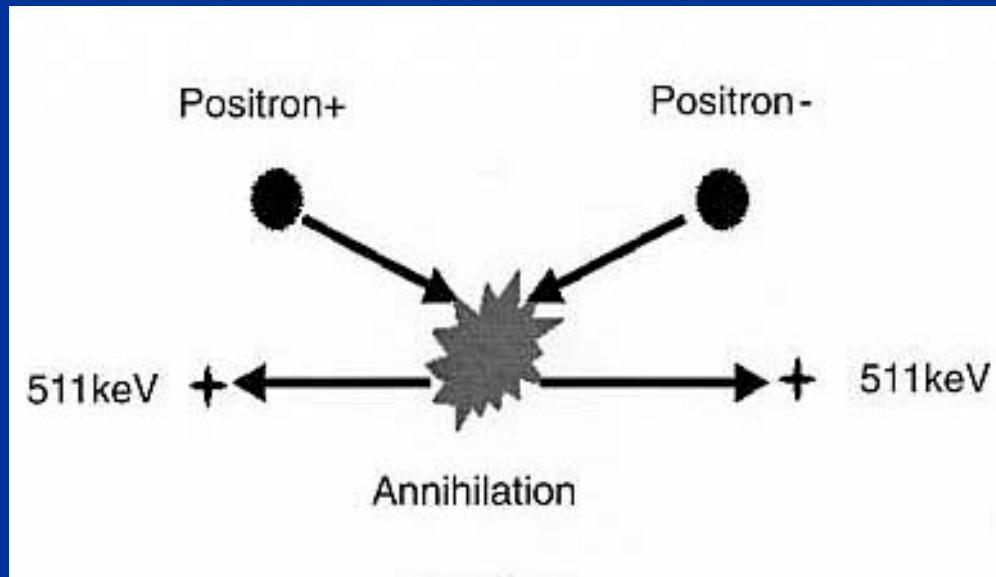
# The New(er) Kid on the Block: PET Positron Emission Tomography



- $^{18}\text{F}$ FDG Images of a normal vs an epileptic brain
- Rapidly growing in popularity for tumor imaging

# Positron Decay and Coincidence Photon Detection

- $p^+ \rightarrow n^0 + e^+ + \nu$
- Positron escapes the nucleus
- Two oppositely directed photons result from the annihilation of the positron with an electron

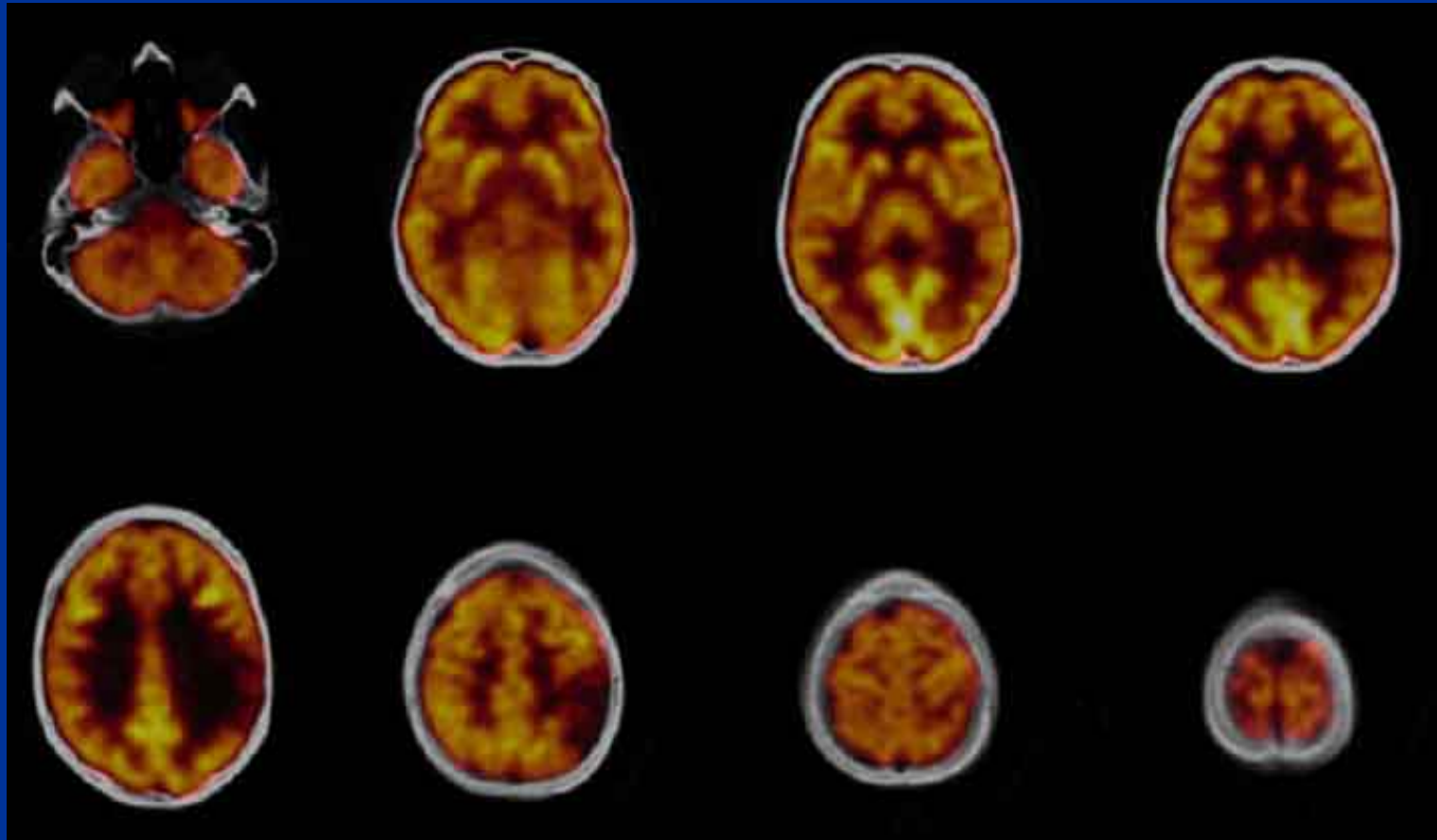


PET Scanner Coincidence Detectors

# $^{18}\text{F}$ FDG

- Fluorodeoxyglucose
- Most commonly used PET radiocompound
- A glucose analog, useful for
  - Differentiating malignant from benign tumors
  - Differentiating scar from viable myocardial tissue
  - Brain function studies

# Cerebral Glucose Metabolism



- Brain tumor diagnosed
- MRI scan suspicious for low-grade astrocytoma
- PET/CT scan shows large hypo-metabolic area in left posterior temporal lobe

# Other PET Applications

- Neurological studies
  - Epilepsy
  - Alzheimers
  - Parkinson's Disease
  - Addictions
- Cancer imaging and localization
  - In demand by Oncologists
- Cardiology studies

# The 'Historical' Problem in Modern Radiology

- Images obtained from Nuclear Medicine were obtained on a computer platform different from those obtained from CT, and also from MRI, Ultrasound, etc.
- Thus, images could not be easily overlaid
- A common software was needed to make best use of the information from each modality

# Radiation Doses from Some Medical X-ray Exams

- Medical Radiation (Effective Whole Body Dose Equivalent)
    - Chest X-ray: 8 mrem (0.08 mSv)
    - Head CT scan: 111 mrem (1.11 mSv)
    - Barium Enema: 406 mrem (4.06 mSv)
    - Extremity X-ray: 1 mrem (0.01 mSv)
- » Source: NCRP Report 100



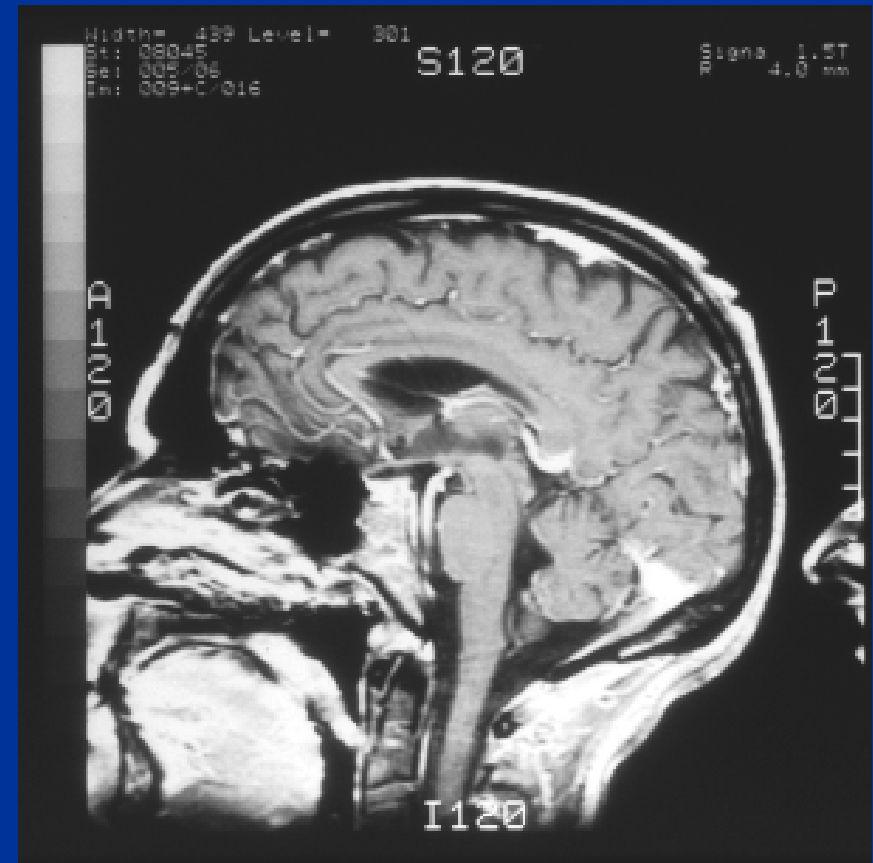
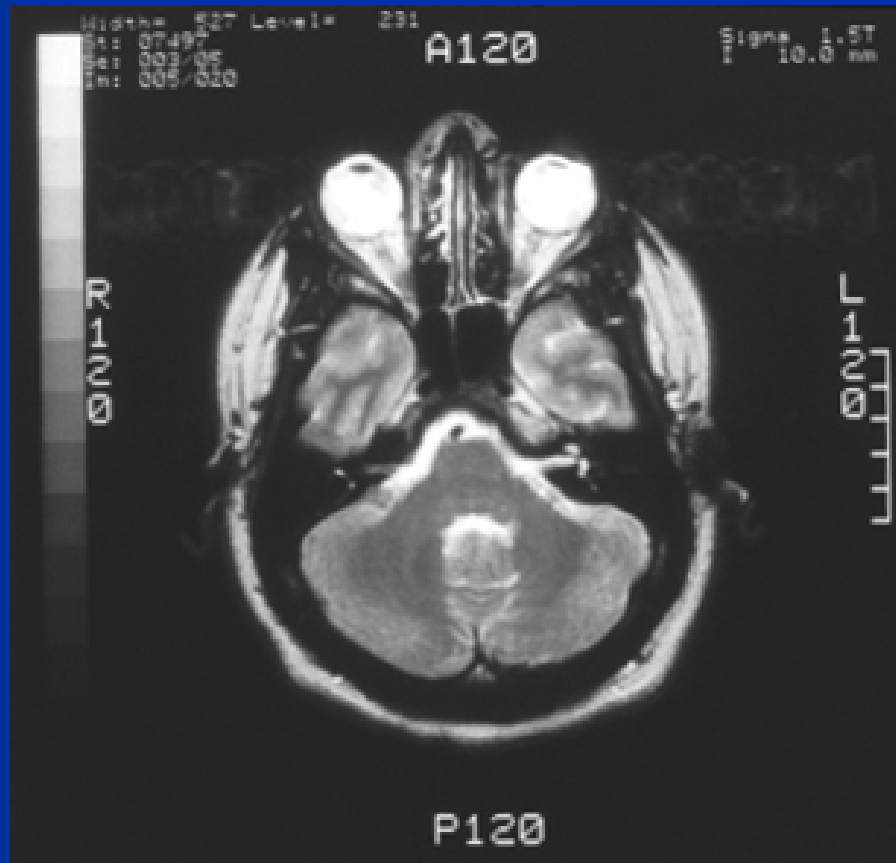
# Radiation Doses and Dose Limits

Flight from Los Angeles to London	5 mrem
Annual public dose limit	100 mrem
Annual natural background	300 mrem
Fetal dose limit	500 mrem
Barium enema	870mrem
Annual radiation worker dose limit	5,000 mrem
Heart catheterization	45,000 mrem
Life saving actions guidance (NCRP-116)	50,000 mrem
Mild acute radiation syndrome	200,000 mrem
LD <sub>50/60</sub> for humans (bone marrow dose)	350,000 mrem
Radiation therapy (localized & fractionated)	6,000,000 mrem

# MRI: Radio Waves & Magnetic Fields

# MRI – Magnetic Resonance Imaging

- Utilizes magnetic fields and RF (radio-frequency) energy to gain information via Nuclear Magnetic Resonance
- No ionizing radiation is used in this process



# Electricity in Space - RTG

## •Nuclear Options:

### –Radioisotope Thermoelectric Generators (RTG)

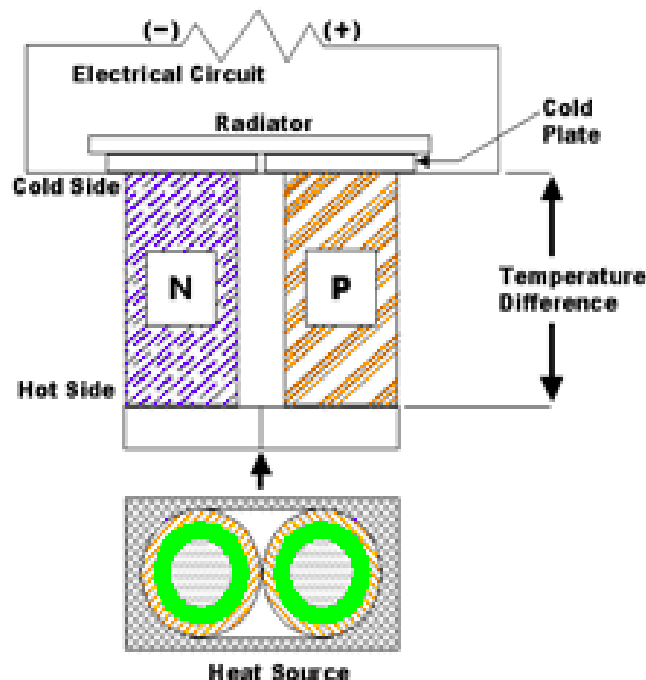
- Work on the principle of radioactive decay.
- Energy is proportional to activity.
- Activity is proportional to half-life and amount of material.
- More material and shorter half-life means more power.
- Shorter half-life runs out sooner.
- Must balance energy supply and mission length.

$$A(t) = A_0 * e^{\left( \ln 2 * time / Half - Life \right)}$$

# RTGs in Space - Theory

- Works on the thermoelectric principle also known as the ‘Seebeck Effect’.

## How A Thermoelectric Device Produces Electricity



- Thermoelectric uncouple is a semi-conductor device with “N” and “P” type material in legs
- Heat applied at hot junction and cooling side produces electrical potential difference between materials (“Seebeck Effect”)
- Connecting cold side terminals through a resistive load causes current to flow in electrical circuit

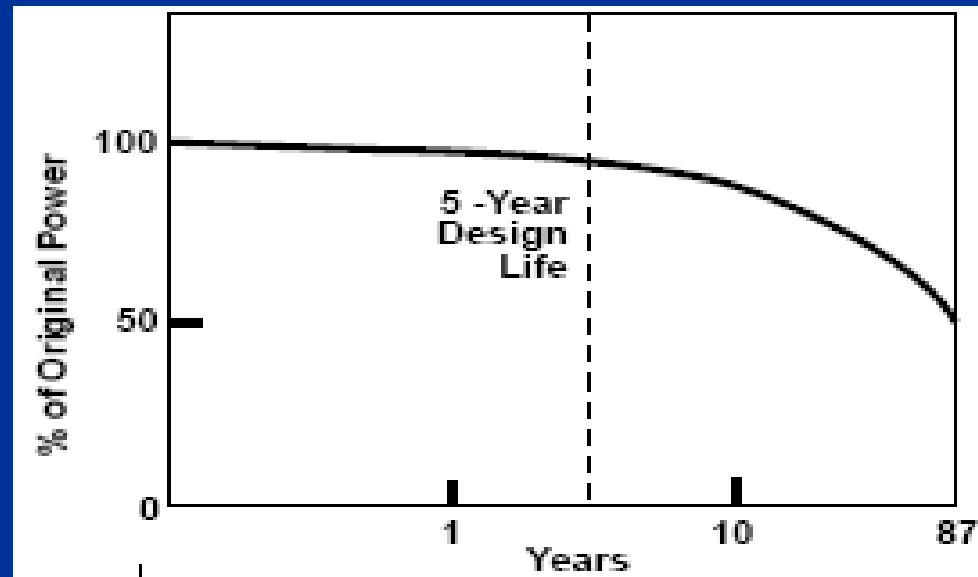
# RTGs in Space – Half-Life

- US RTGs use  $\text{Pu}^{238}$  as the radioactive material.

- Half-Life of 87.7 years.
- 96% of energy (activity) after 5 years
- 50% of energy after 87.7 years

- Old US and Russian RTGs used  $\text{Po}^{210}$ .

- Half-Life of 138 days.

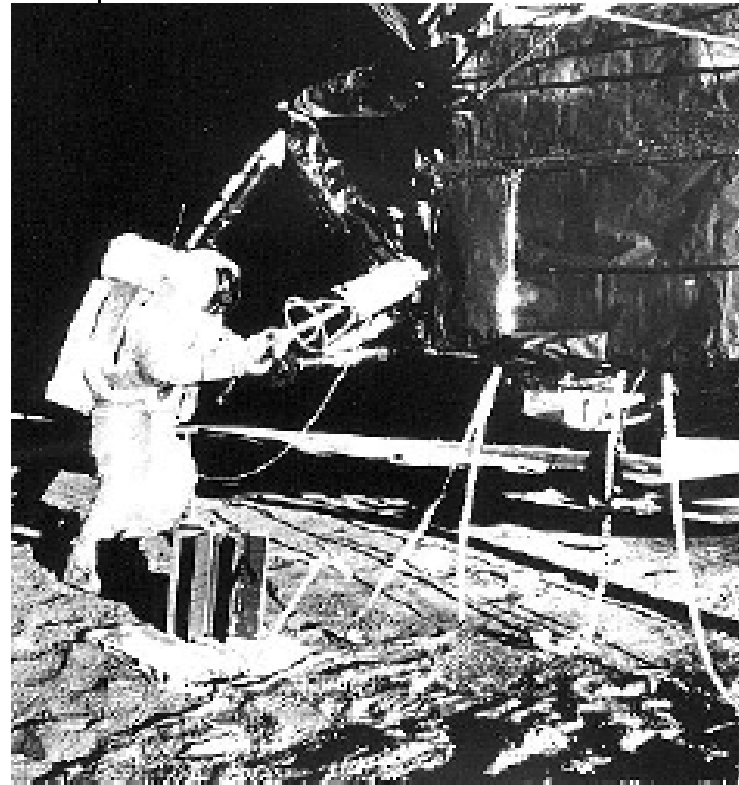


# RTGs in Space - Radiation

- Pu-238 and Po<sup>210</sup> are alpha ( $\alpha$ ) emitters.
- Alpha radiation cannot penetrate very far.
  - Stopped by a sheet of paper or 10cm of air.
  - Turns into heat in the RTG material.
  - Very little radiation gets out of the shielding.
  - Not ‘weapons grade’ material.
  - Ceramic form that is very heat and impact resistant.

# RTGs in Space - History

1959: Atomic Energy Commission members show President Eisenhower the new 'nuclear battery' for use in US satellites.



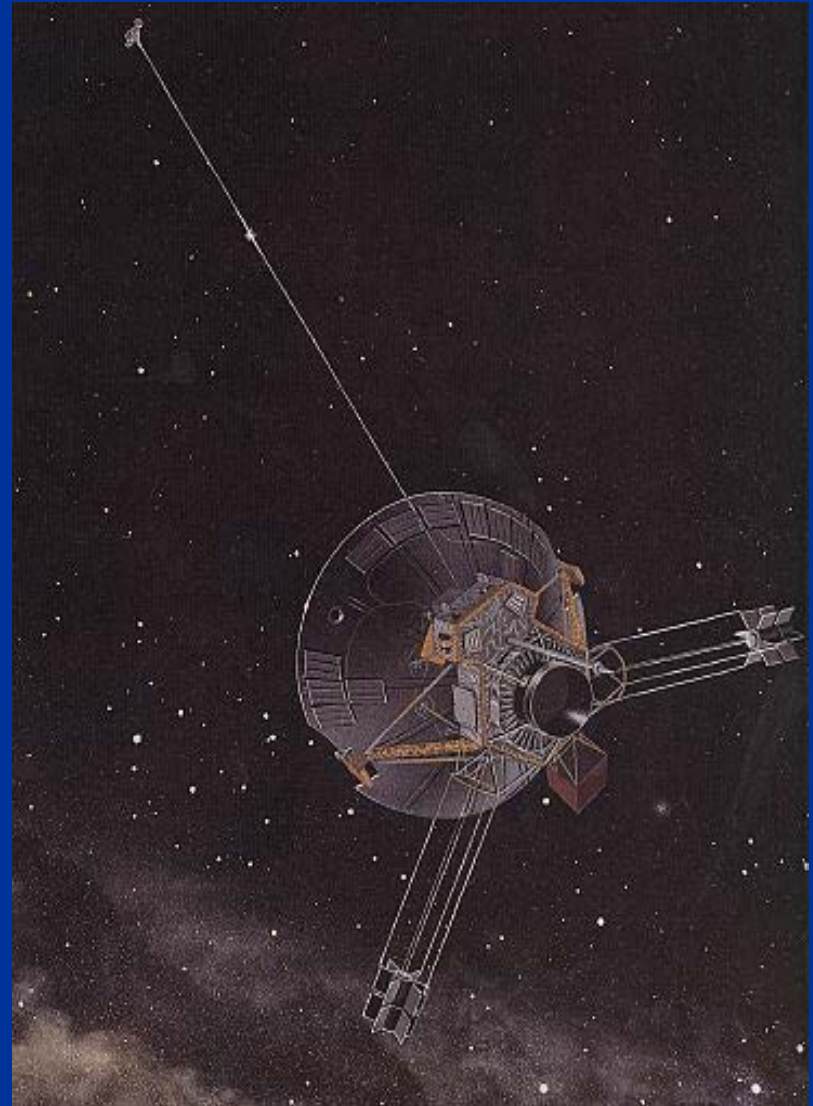
*On the moon, Apollo-12 astronaut Gordon Bean prepares to load the plutonium-238 heat source into the SNAP-2 thermoelectric generator (arrow). The generator produced 73 watts of power for the Apollo lunar surface experiment package for nearly eight years.*

# RTGs in Space - History

- Original RTG in space was for a US Navy navigation satellite.
  - 1961 SNAP-3 unit (Space Nuclear Auxiliary Power)
  - 2.7 watts of electrical power.
  - Lasted for 15 years.
- RTGs were used in 25 other missions from 1961 to 2005 from military satellites to the Apollo missions.

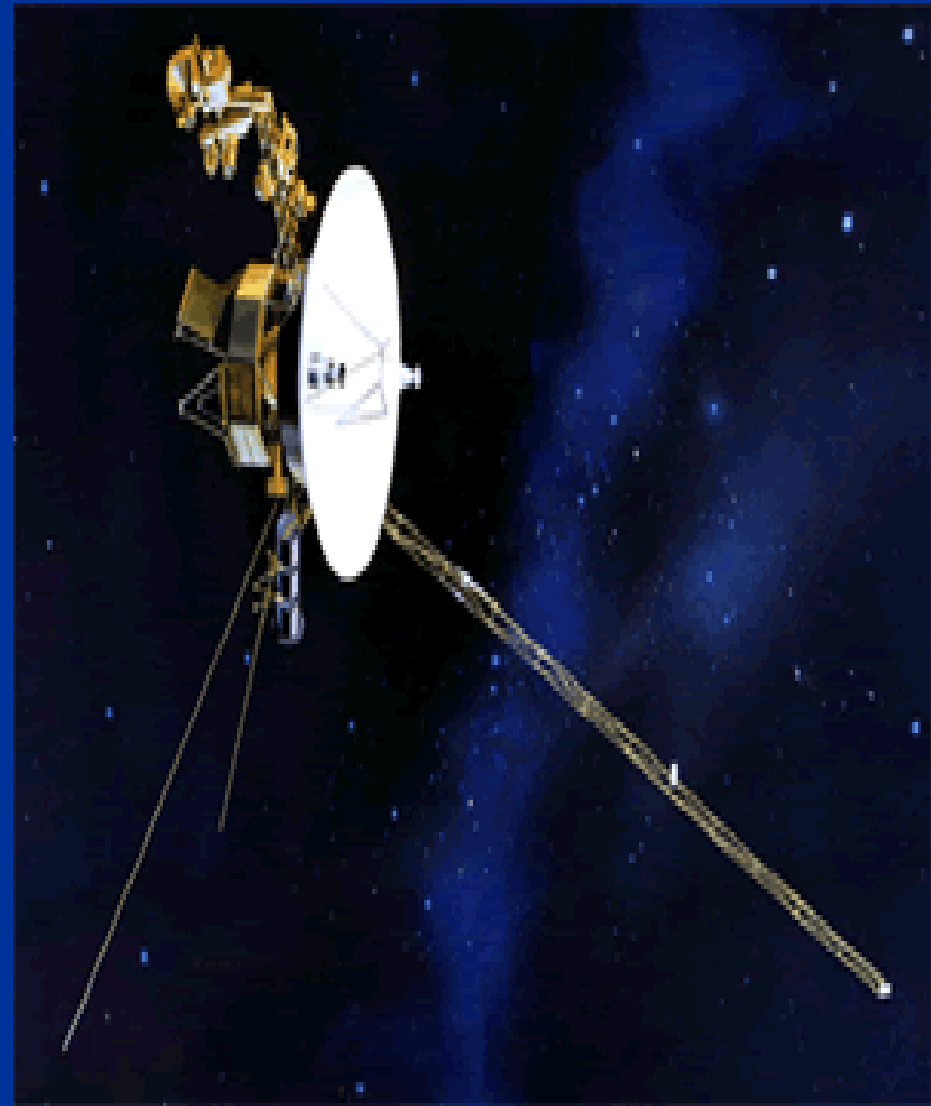
# RTGs in Space - History

- 1972: Pioneer 10 & 11 launched to explore the outer planets.
  - Both survived the high radiation around Jupiter.
  - Both crafts left the solar system after their mission was performed and continued to send back data for 17 years.
  - Still in contact with crafts.



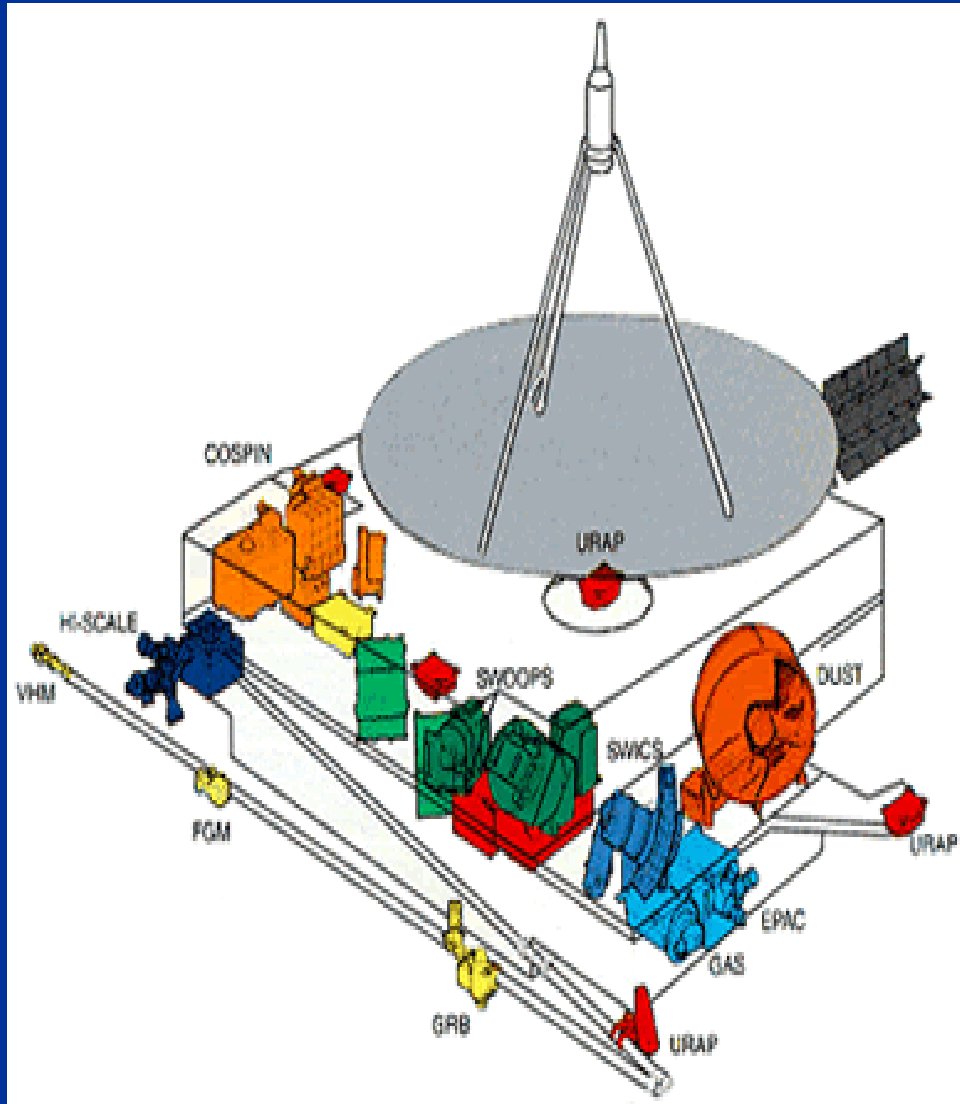
# RTGs in Space - History

- 1977: Voyager 1&2 launched to explore the outer planets.
  - Transmitted high speed data and first high-quality pictures.
  - Both crafts left the solar system after their mission was performed and continue to send back data.



# RTGs in Space - History

- 1990: Ulysses launched to explore the top and bottom of the sun.
  - Mission extended after initial successes.
  - First mission to explore solar system outside the ‘disk’ of the planets.
  - Find the RTG.



# RTGs in Space - History

- 1989: Galileo launched to explore Jupiter and her moons.
  - Took the long-way to Jupiter; by Venus and Earth twice.
  - Required a long-lived power supply to make the 4-year flight.
  - Operated for 14 years.
  - Find the RTG.



# RTGs in Space - History

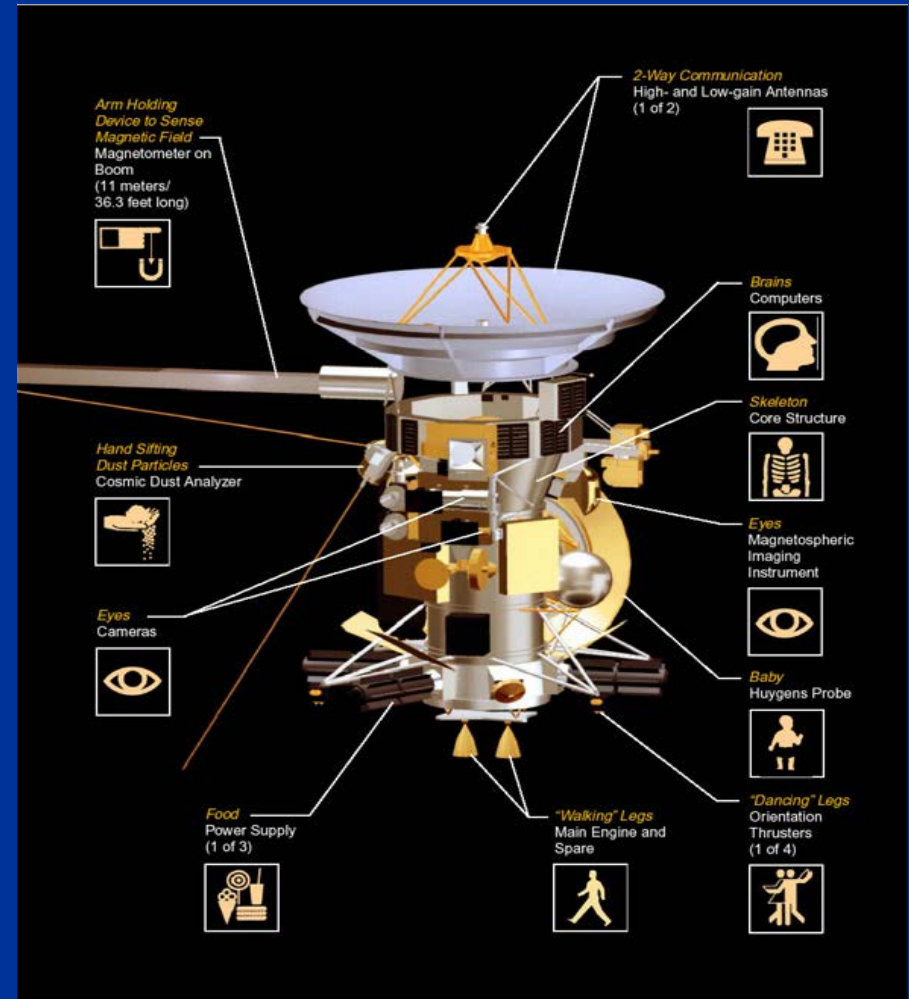
- Galileo also needed heat for its long mission.
- 120 - 1 watt Radioactive Heater Units (RHU) placed all over the spacecraft.
- Safety design is similar to RTGs.



# RTGs in Space - History

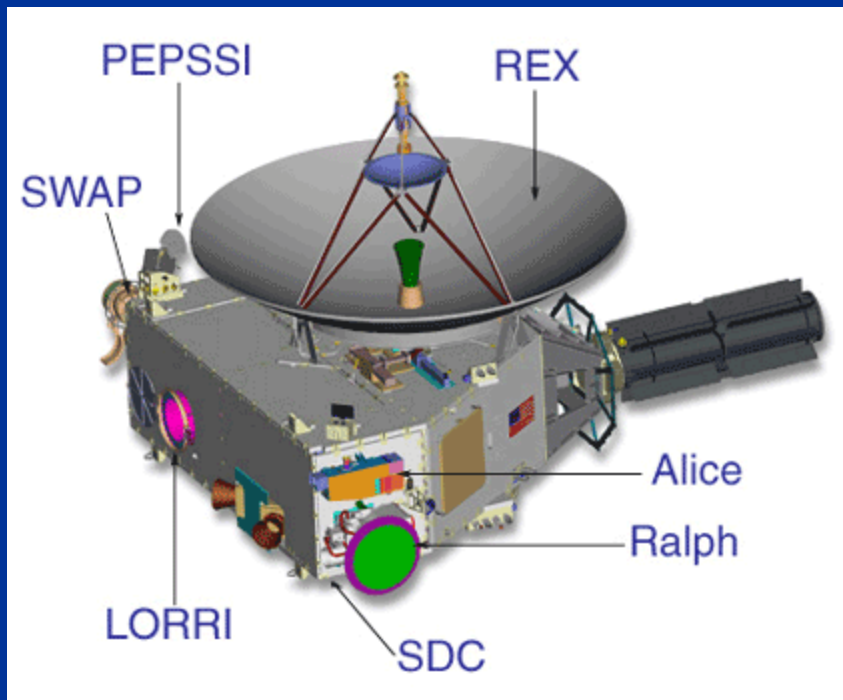
- 1997 -Cassini Mission to Saturn and moons.

- Three General Purpose Heat Source RTGs. (current generation)
- Four-year mission once the craft gets to Saturn.
- Great results coming back from craft.
- Just discovered new moon of Saturn.



# RTGs in Space - History

- January 2006
- New Horizons Mission
  - Pluto & Charon
  - Kuiper Belt Objects



# RTGs in Space - History

- Viking Landers- 1975
  - Used RTGs for power
  - Six Years on Nuclear Power
- Mars Pathfinder-1997
  - Rover used RHUs for heat.
  - Three months on solar power

