

Unlocking the Inelastic Dark Matter window with Vector Mediators

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in collaboration with Peter Reimitz and Renata Z. Funchal

based on: [arxiv:2410.00881](https://arxiv.org/abs/2410.00881)

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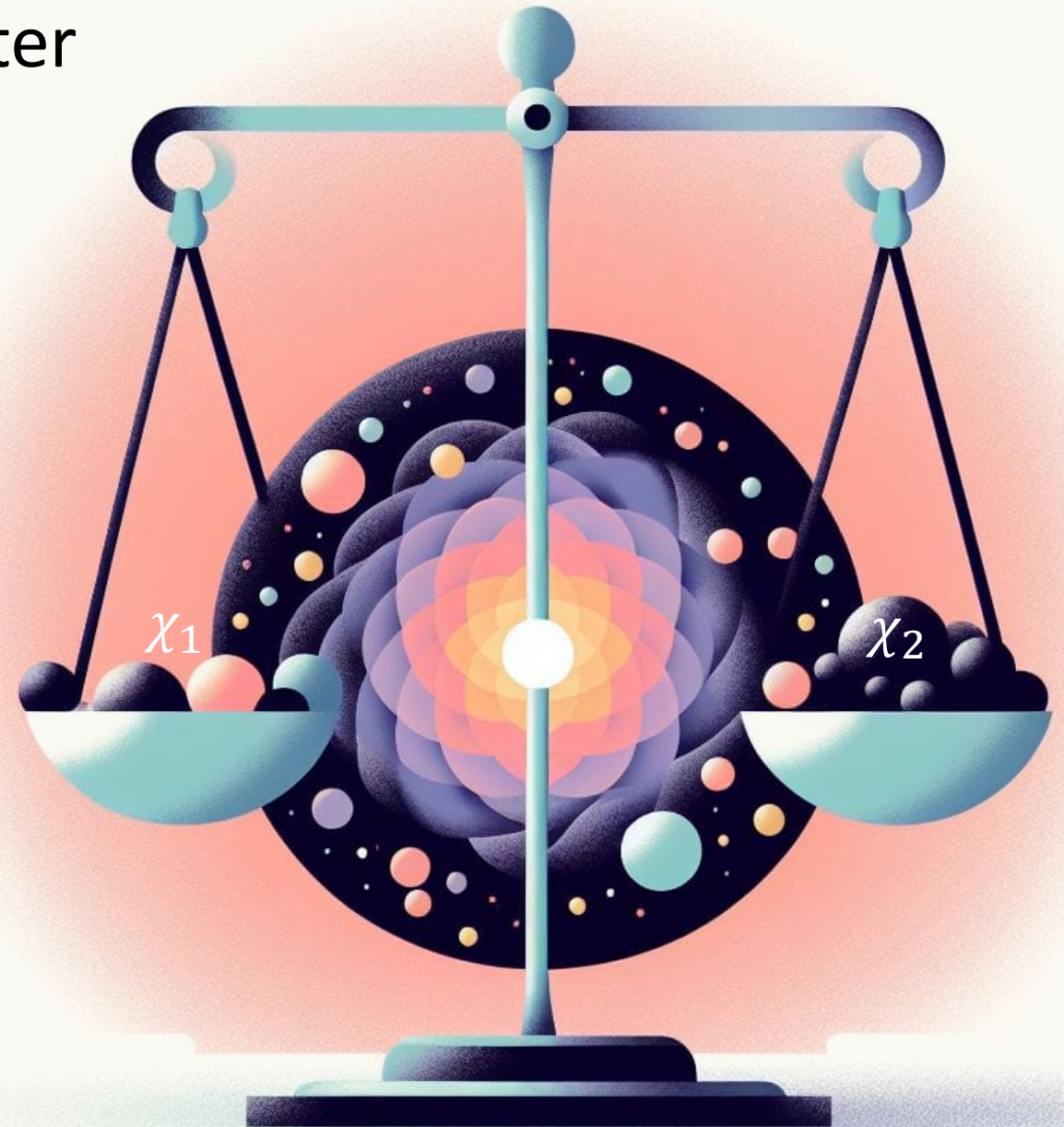
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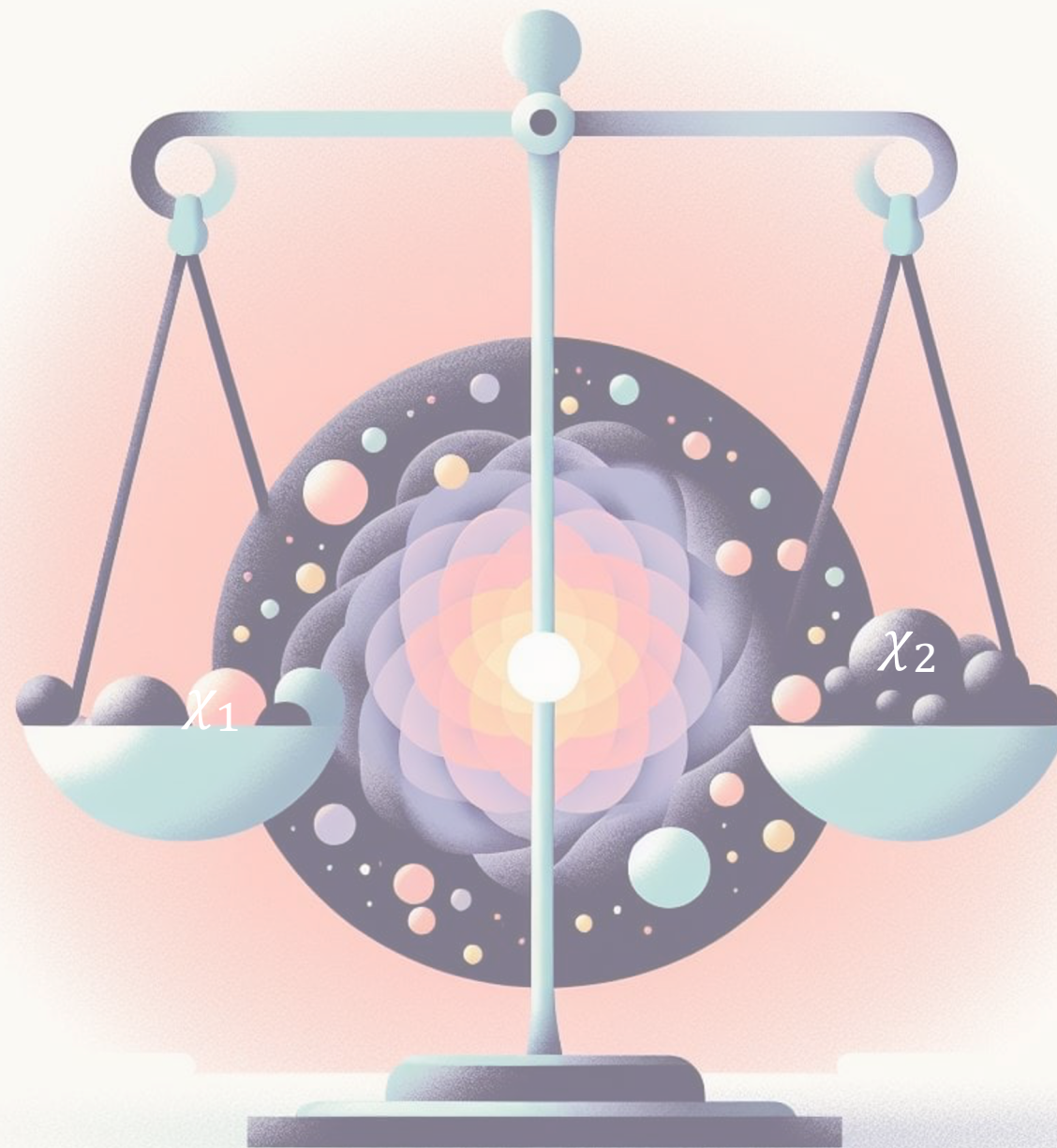
Dark Matter and Neutrinos School

07 May 2025



Outline

1. Introduction and Motivations
2. Inelastic Dark Matter
 - ↪ Theoretical framework
 - ↪ Decay Rates
3. Relic Density Computation
4. ReD-DeLiVeR code
5. Bounds
6. Conclusions



Introduction and Motivations

Standard Model (SM)

- most **successful** description of the fundamental interactions between elementary particles (up to this date!)
- several confirmed **experimental predictions**

However... it cannot be the final theory of Nature!

There are several **problems** and **unanswered** questions

Hierarchy Problem

Neutrino Masses

Dark Matter candidates + ...



How can we find a solution?

We need to rely on **Beyond the Standard Model (BSM)** theories

Standard Model of Elementary Particles

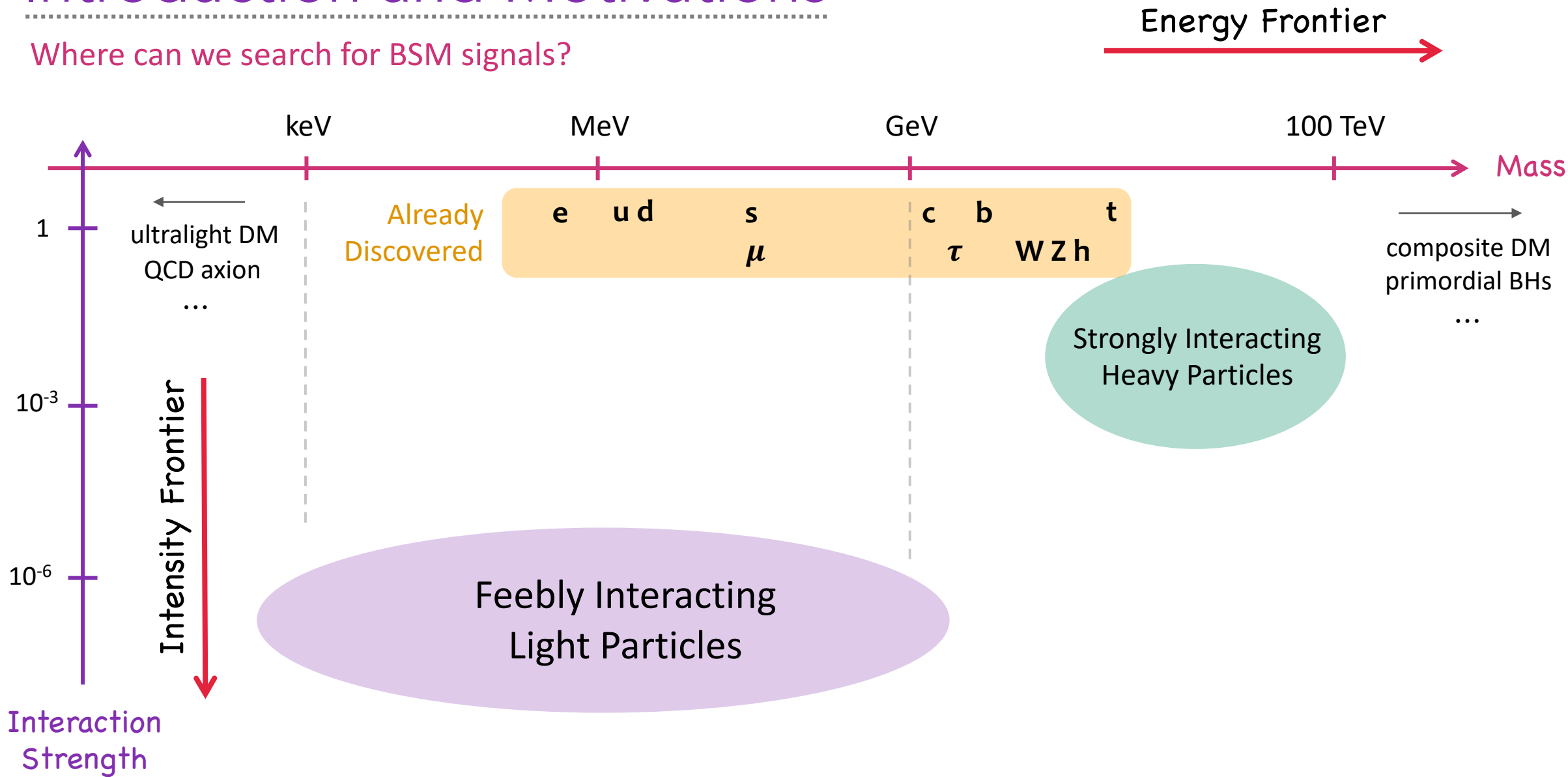
three generations of matter (fermions)			interactions / force carriers (bosons)	
I	II	III		
mass charge spin				
$\approx 2.2 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ $\frac{2}{3}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ u up	$\approx 1.28 \text{ GeV}/c^2$ $\frac{2}{3}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ c charm	$\approx 173.1 \text{ GeV}/c^2$ $\frac{2}{3}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ t top	0 0 1 g gluon	$\approx 124.97 \text{ GeV}/c^2$ 0 0 0 H higgs
$\approx 4.7 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ $-\frac{1}{3}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ d down	$\approx 96 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ $-\frac{1}{3}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ s strange	$\approx 4.18 \text{ GeV}/c^2$ $-\frac{1}{3}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ b bottom	0 0 1 γ photon	
$\approx 0.511 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ -1 $\frac{1}{2}$ e electron	$\approx 105.66 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ -1 $\frac{1}{2}$ μ muon	$\approx 1.7768 \text{ GeV}/c^2$ -1 $\frac{1}{2}$ τ tau	$\approx 91.19 \text{ GeV}/c^2$ 0 1 Z Z boson	
$< 1.0 \text{ eV}/c^2$ 0 $\frac{1}{2}$ ν_e electron neutrino	$< 0.17 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ 0 $\frac{1}{2}$ ν_μ muon neutrino	$< 18.2 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ 0 $\frac{1}{2}$ ν_τ tau neutrino	$\approx 80.39 \text{ GeV}/c^2$ ± 1 1 W W boson	
LEPTONS			GAUGE BOSONS VECTOR BOSONS	SCALAR BOSONS

SM gauge group

$$SU(3)_c \otimes SU(2)_L \otimes U(1)_Y$$

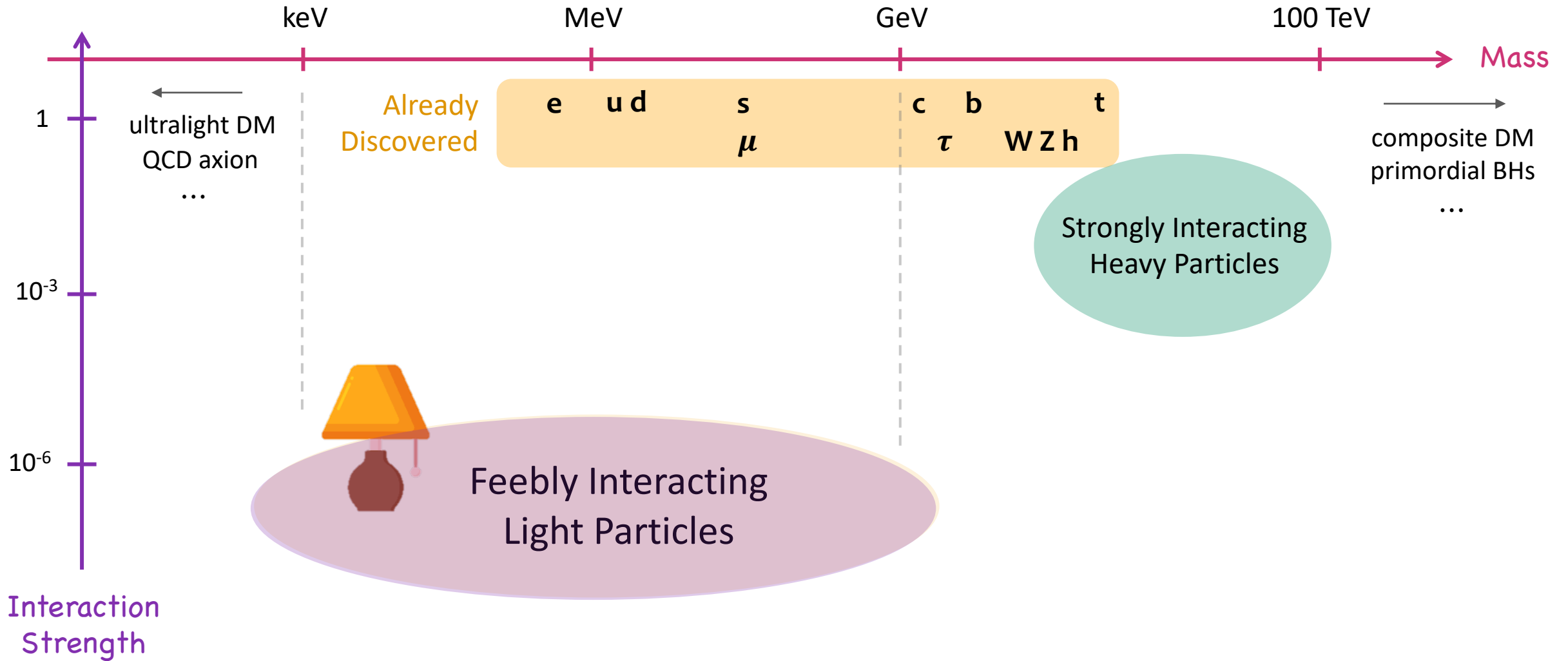
Introduction and Motivations

Where can we search for BSM signals?



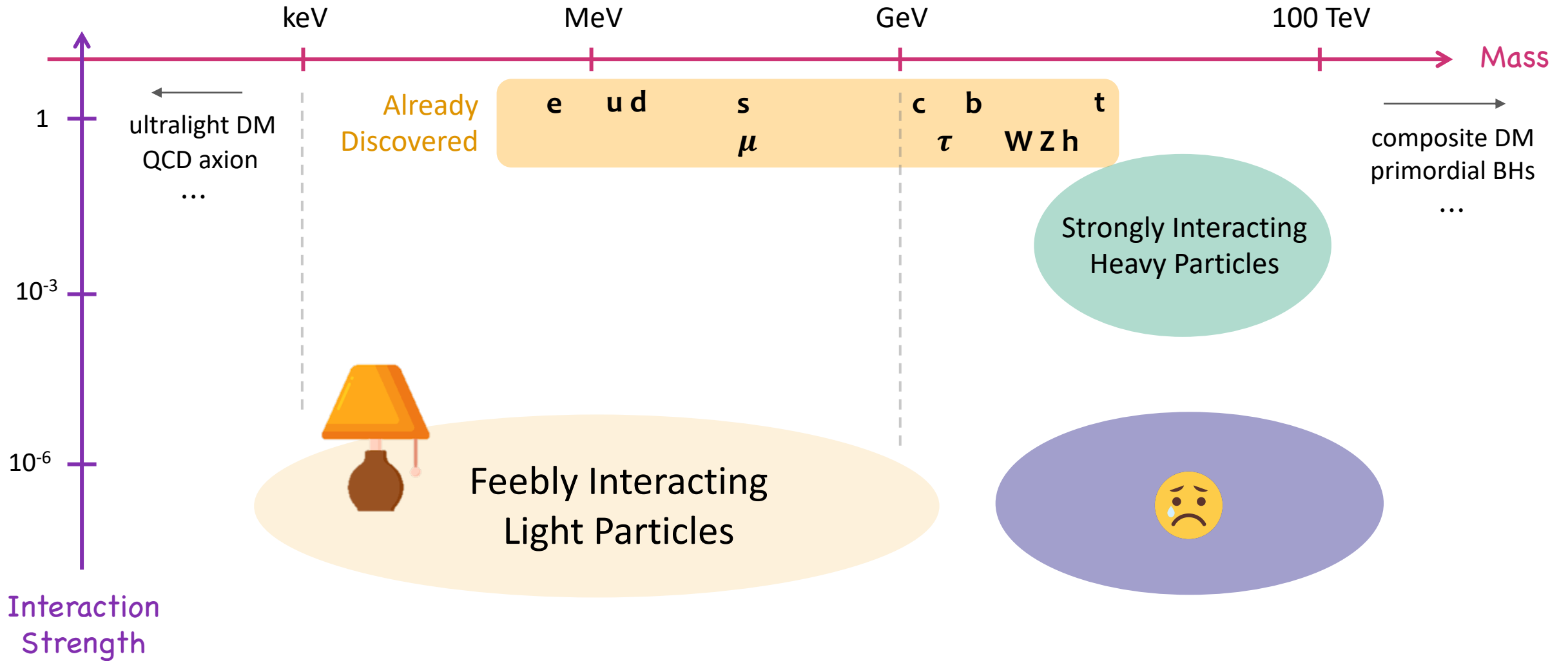
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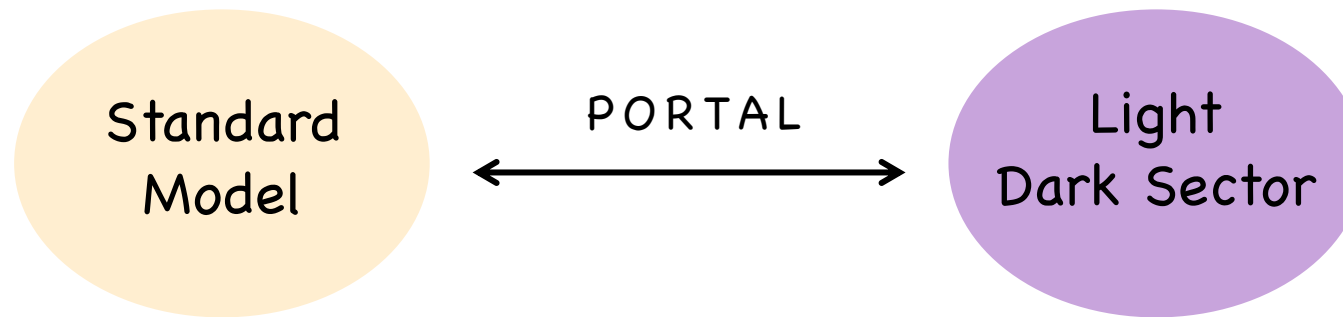
Introduction and Motivations

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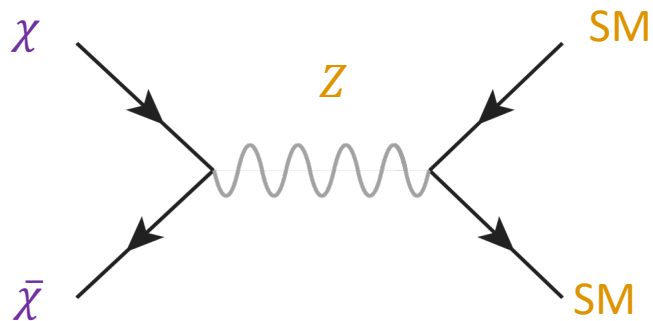
Introduction and Motivations

How can we search for light particle BSM signals?



Suppose we have particles χ and $\bar{\chi}$ in the dark sector

➤ natural possibility: couple to the gauge bosons of **weak interactions**



However...

$$\langle \sigma v \rangle \sim \frac{m_\chi^2}{m_Z^4}$$

which means that lowering the DM mass decreases the thermal-average cross section

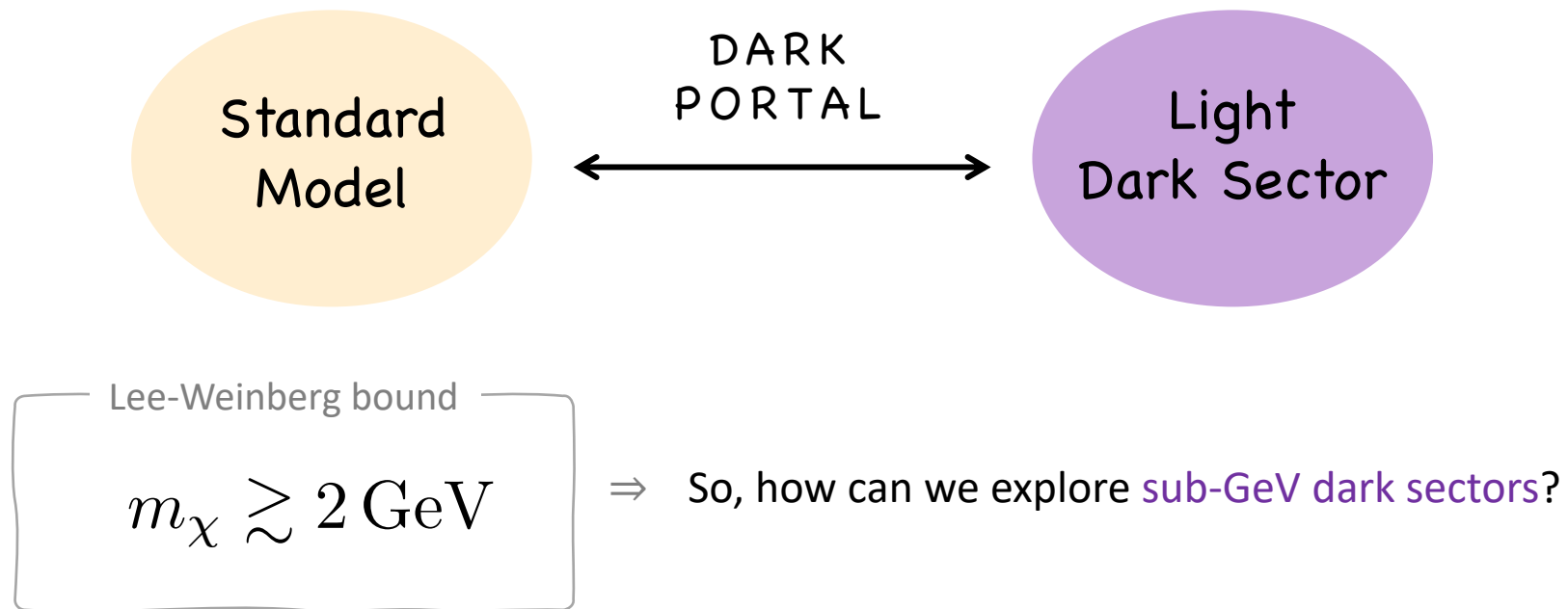
→ **DM is overproduced!**

Lee-Weinberg bound

$$m_\chi \gtrsim 2 \text{ GeV}$$

Introduction and Motivations

How can we search for light particle BSM signals?

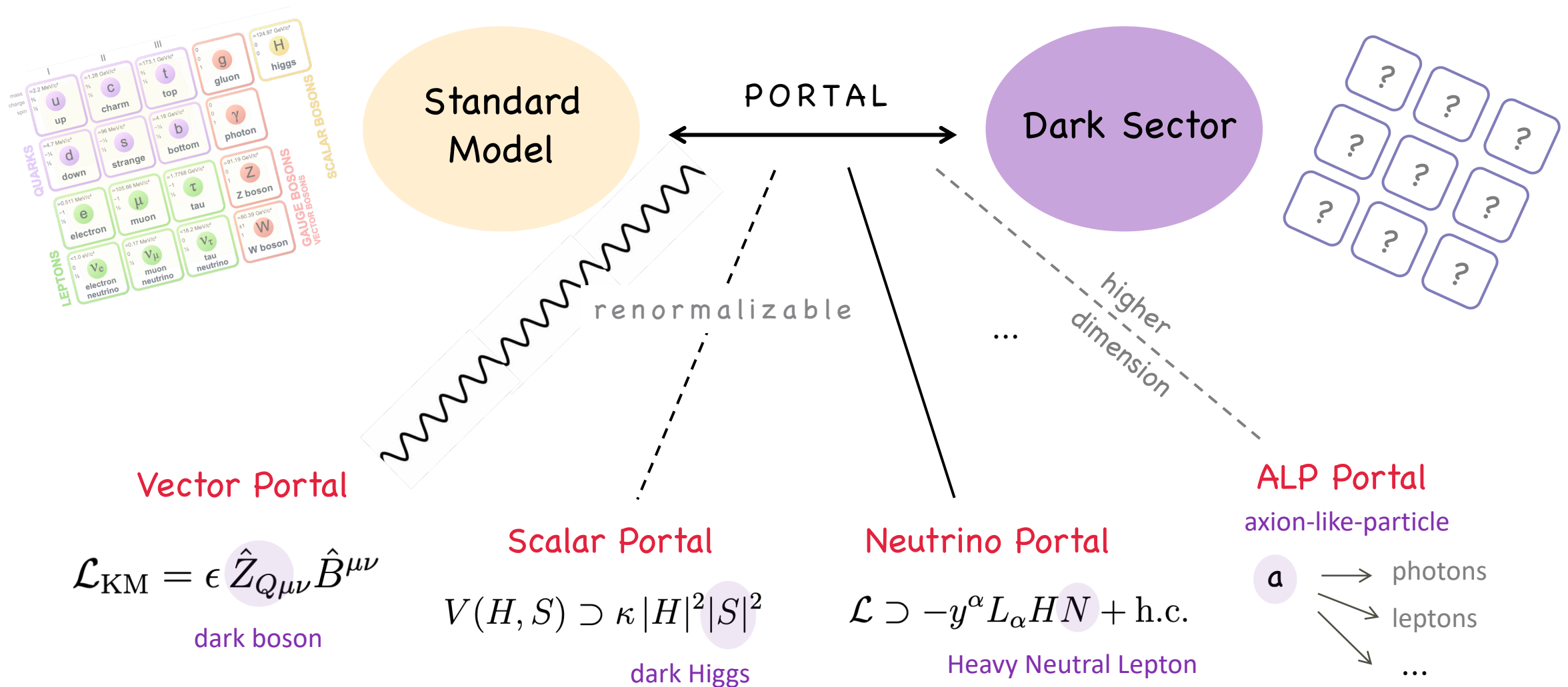


➤ solution: inclusion of new light dark sector mediator states!

These light mediators will act as portals between the dark sector and the SM.

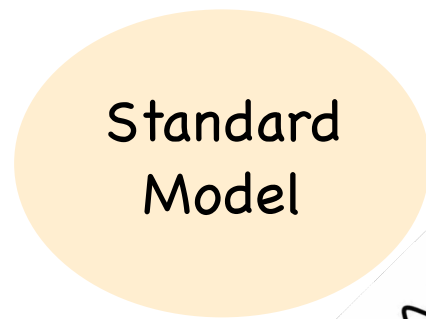
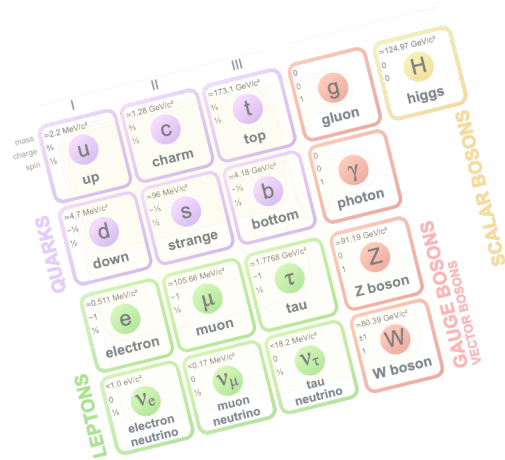
Introduction and Motivations • Hidden Portals

How can we search for light particle BSM signals?



Introduction and Motivations • Hidden Portals

How can we search for light particle BSM signals?



PORTAL



Vector Portal

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{KM}} = \epsilon \hat{Z}_{Q\mu\nu} \hat{B}^{\mu\nu}$$

dark boson

Scalar Portal

$$V(H, S) \supset \kappa |H|^2 |S|^2$$

dark Higgs

Neutrino Portal

$$\mathcal{L} \supset -y^\alpha L_\alpha H N + \text{h.c.}$$

Heavy Neutral Lepton

ALP Portal

axion-like-particle



Inelastic Dark Matter

Theoretical Framework

Dark Sector

two-component Weyl fermions forming a Dirac pair

new vector mediator coming from a spontaneously broken $U(1)_Q$ abelian gauge symmetry

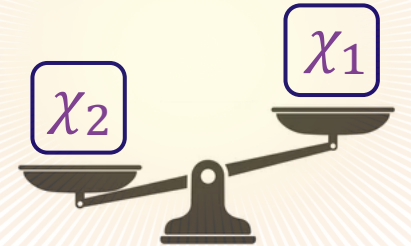
pseudo-Dirac pair

χ_1

χ_2

Z_Q

Inelastic Dark Matter (iDM)



From the diagonalization of the fermion mass terms

$$\mathcal{L} \supset -\overset{\text{Dirac}}{m_D \psi_1 \psi_2} - \overset{\text{Majorana}}{\frac{1}{2}(\delta_1 \psi_1^2 + \delta_2 \psi_2^2)} + \text{h.c.}, \quad \text{with} \quad \delta_{1,2} \ll m_D$$

$$\chi_1 \simeq \frac{i}{\sqrt{2}}(\psi_1 - \psi_2),$$

pseudo-Dirac pair with nearly degenerate masses

$$\chi_2 \simeq \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}(\psi_1 + \psi_2),$$

$$m_{1,2} \simeq m_D \mp \frac{1}{2}(\delta_1 + \delta_2) \Rightarrow$$

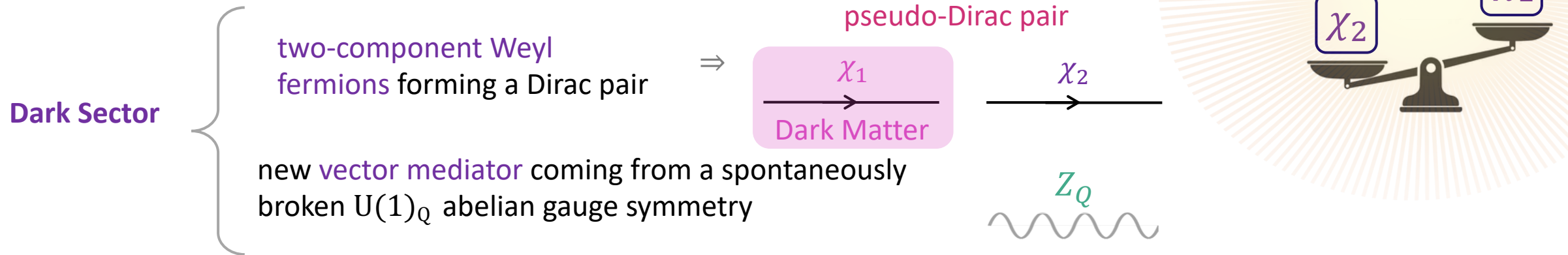
Mass splitting

$$\Delta := \frac{m_2 - m_1}{m_1} = \frac{\delta_1 + \delta_2}{m_1} < 1$$

$\Rightarrow$ mass eigenstates

Inelastic Dark Matter

Theoretical Framework



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$\Rightarrow$ mass eigenstates

$$\chi_1 \simeq \frac{i}{\sqrt{2}}(\psi_1 - \psi_2), \quad \text{pseudo-Dirac pair with nearly degenerate masses}$$

$$\chi_2 \simeq \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}(\psi_1 + \psi_2), \quad m_{1,2} \simeq m_D \mp \frac{1}{2}(\delta_1 + \delta_2) \Rightarrow$$

Mass splitting

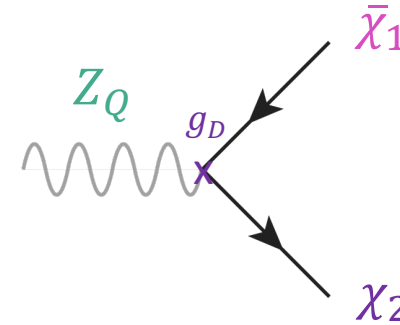
$$\Delta := \frac{m_2 - m_1}{m_1} = \frac{\delta_1 + \delta_2}{m_1} < 1$$

Inelastic Dark Matter

Theoretical Framework

The interaction term with the mediator turns to be **off-diagonal**

$$\mathcal{L} \supset g_D Z_{Q\mu} (\psi_1^\dagger \bar{\sigma}^\mu \psi_1 - \psi_2^\dagger \bar{\sigma}^\mu \psi_2) \longrightarrow \mathcal{L}_{\text{int}}^D = \frac{i}{2} g_D Z_{Q\mu} \bar{\chi}_2 \gamma^\mu \chi_1 + \text{h.c.}$$



Motivations

➤ **Thermal relics:** DM abundance can be computed via thermal freeze-out.

➤ **Evades indirect and direct detection experimental limits**

The heavier state χ_2 can decay into the DM candidate χ_1 , depleting its abundance

⇒ **no present-day population of heavier states** to co-annihilate with the DM → avoid indirect detection signals

⇒ similarly, **direct detection** signals depend on **up-scatter** of the light state, which is **kinematically suppressed**

➤ **Evades stringent CMB limits**

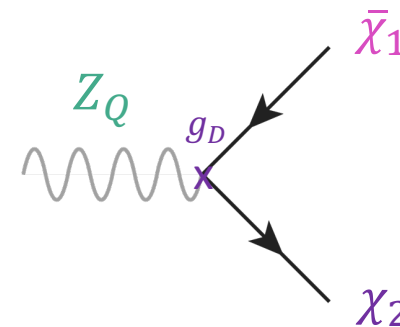
Since the abundance of χ_2 is already reduced during recombination era, **coannihilations that would inject energy into the plasma are suppressed.**

Inelastic Dark Matter

Theoretical Framework

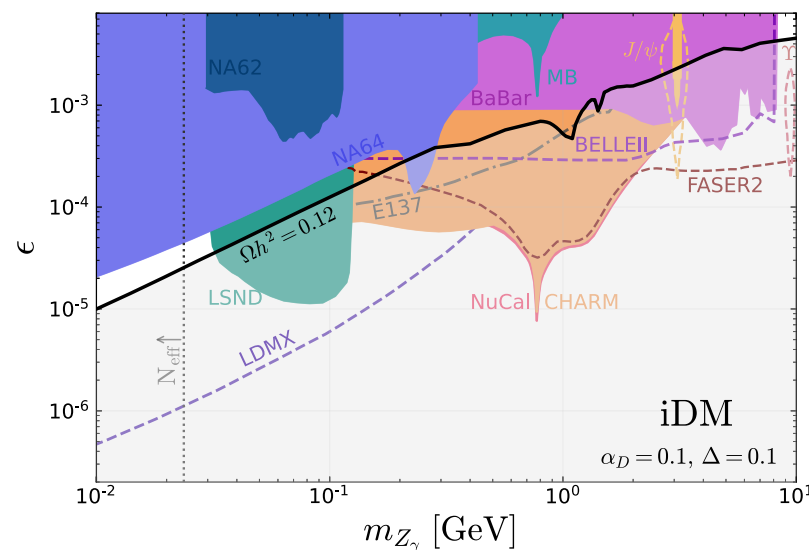
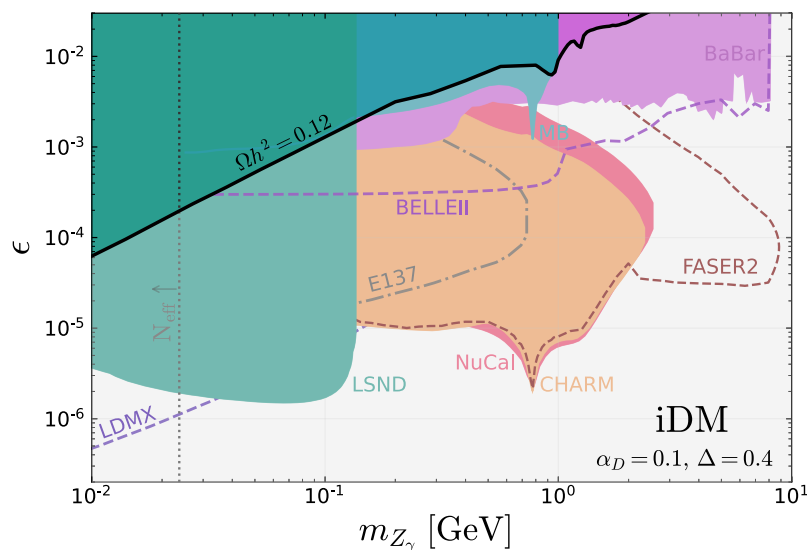
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What's new?

- In the literature: only considered the minimal scenario with a secluded **dark photon portal** Z_D
However... this case has been nearly **completely ruled out by experimental limits**...



Inelastic Dark Matter

Theoretical Framework

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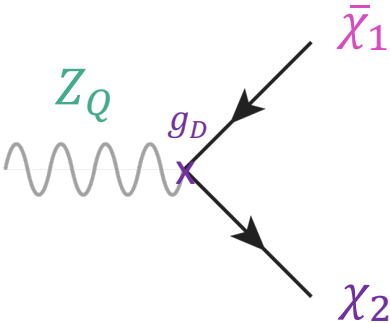
What's new?

- This work: we consider the case of **generic charges for the $U(1)_Q$ group**



vector mediator also couples to the SM via **direct terms** depending on the choice of charge

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{L}_{\text{int}}^{\text{SM}} &= e \epsilon J_{\text{em}}^\mu Z_{Q\mu} - g_Q J_Q^\mu Z_{Q\mu} \\ J_Q^\mu &= \sum_f q_Q^f \bar{f} \gamma^\mu f + \sum_{\ell=e,\mu,\tau} q_Q^{\nu_\ell} \bar{\nu}_\ell \gamma^\mu P_L \nu_\ell, \end{aligned}$$



$$Q = x_B B - x_e L_e - x_\mu L_\mu - x_\tau L_\tau$$

x_B	x_e	x_μ	x_τ	Q	q_Q^f			
					quarks	e/ν_e	μ/ν_μ	τ/ν_τ
1	1	1	1	$B - L$	$\frac{1}{3}$	-1	-1	-1
1	0	0	3	$B - 3L_\tau$	$\frac{1}{3}$	0	0	-3
1	0	0	0	B	$\frac{1}{3}$	0	0	0
0	0	-1	1	$L_\mu - L_\tau$	0	0	1	-1

Inelastic Dark Matter

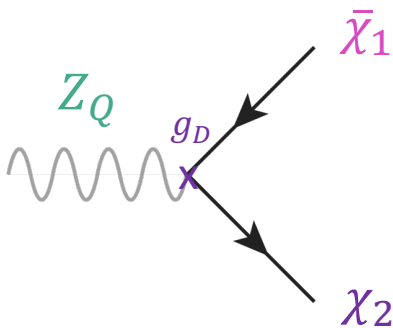
Theoretical Framework

The interaction term with the mediator turns to be **off-diagonal**

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ALF, P. Reimitz, R.Z. Funchal
[arXiv:2410.00881](https://arxiv.org/abs/2410.00881) [hep-ph]

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iDM_Q
 models

free parameters: $m_{Z_Q}, R, \Delta, g_Q, \alpha_D$

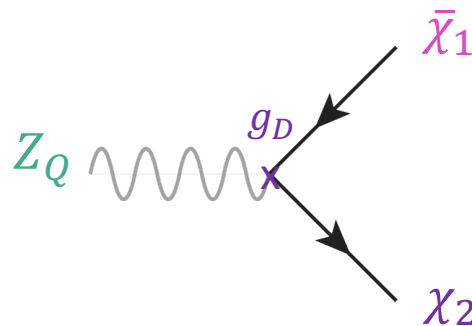
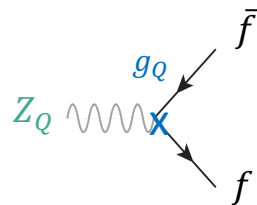
Inelastic Dark Matter · Decay Rates

→ Hierarchy $m_{Z_Q} > m_1 + m_2$

→ Limit $g_D \gg g_Q$

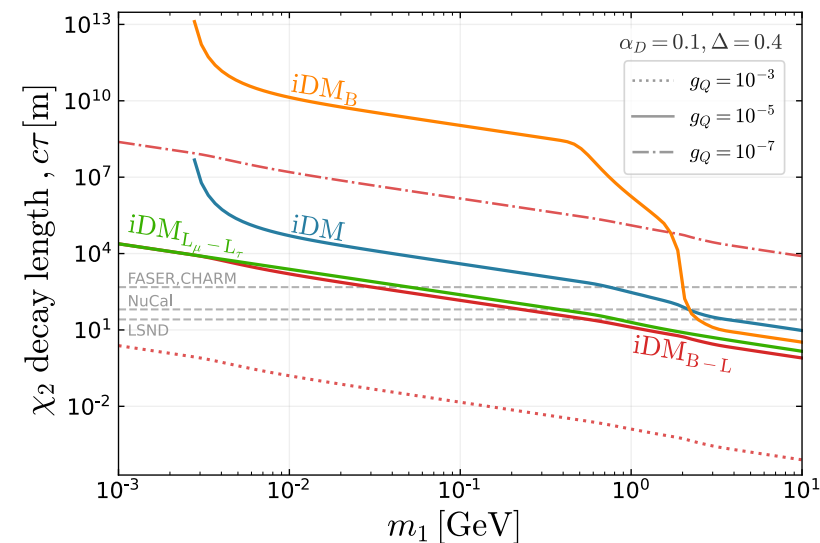
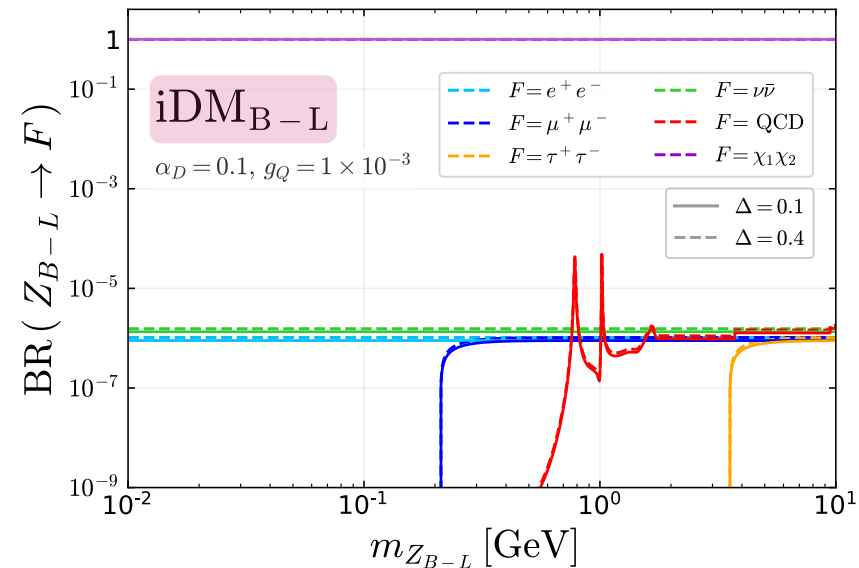
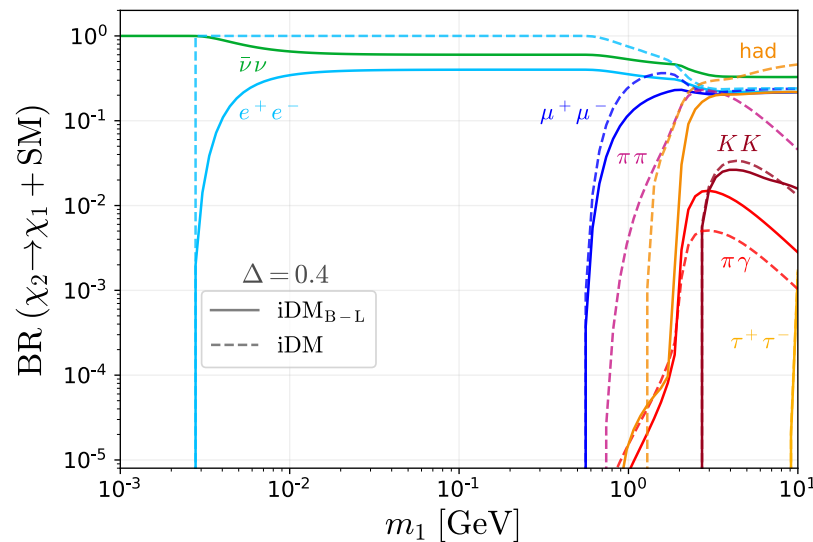
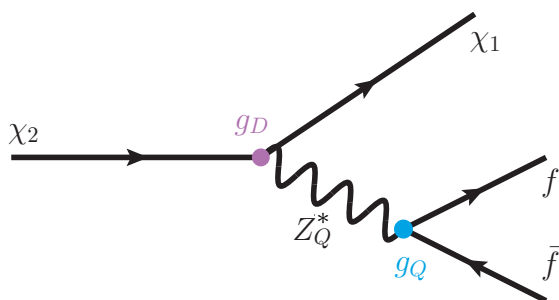
Mediator

prompt-decay



+

Dark fermion



Inelastic Dark Matter · Relic Density Computation

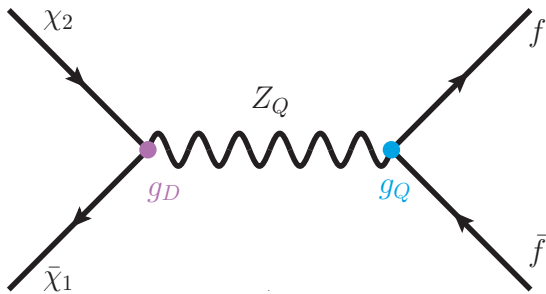
Boltzmann Equation

$$\frac{dY_{1,2}}{dx} = \frac{s}{Hx} \left[-\langle\sigma v\rangle_{12\rightarrow ff} (Y_1 Y_2 - Y_1^{\text{eq}} Y_2^{\text{eq}}) \pm 2 \langle\sigma v\rangle_{22\rightarrow 11} \left((Y_2)^2 - \left(Y_1 \frac{Y_2^{\text{eq}}}{Y_1^{\text{eq}}} \right)^2 \right) \right. \\ \left. \pm \left(\langle\sigma v\rangle_{2f\rightarrow 1f} Y_f^{\text{eq}} + \frac{1}{s} \langle\Gamma\rangle_{2\rightarrow 1ff} \right) \left(Y_2 - Y_1 \frac{Y_2^{\text{eq}}}{Y_1^{\text{eq}}} \right) \right],$$

Inelastic Dark Matter · Relic Density Computation

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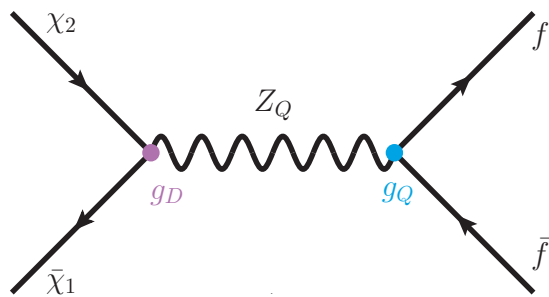


a) $\chi_1 \chi_2 \rightarrow \text{SM}$

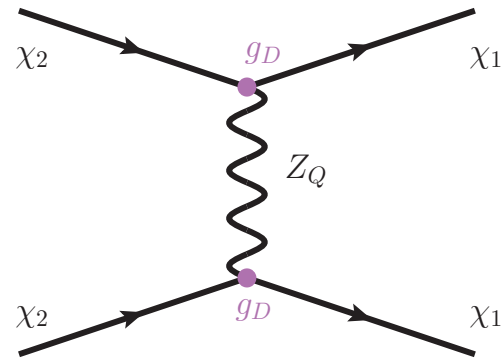
Inelastic Dark Matter · Relic Density Computation

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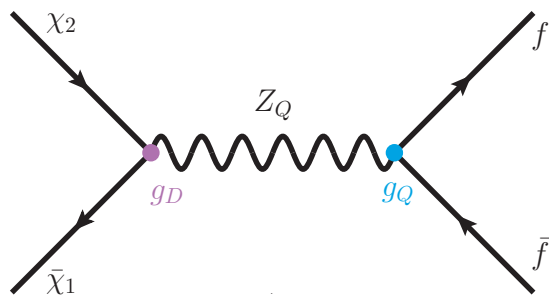


b) $\chi_2 \chi_2 \rightarrow \chi_1 \chi_1$

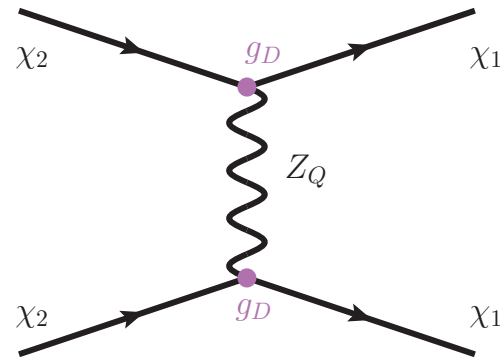
Inelastic Dark Matter · Relic Density Computation

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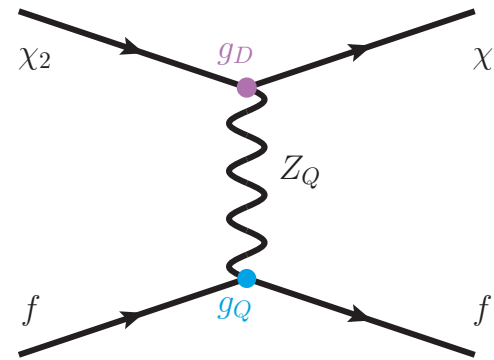
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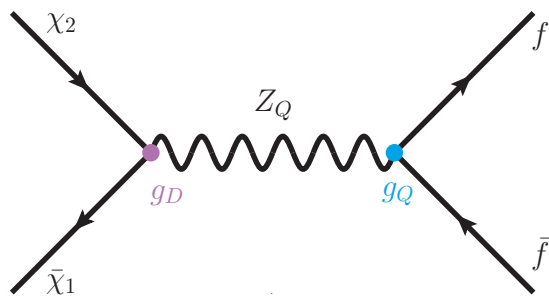


c) $\chi_2 f \rightarrow \chi_1 f$

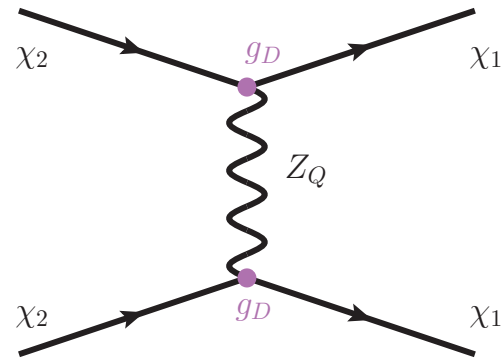
Inelastic Dark Matter · Relic Density Computation

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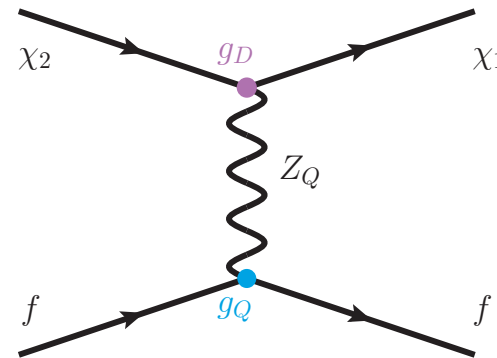
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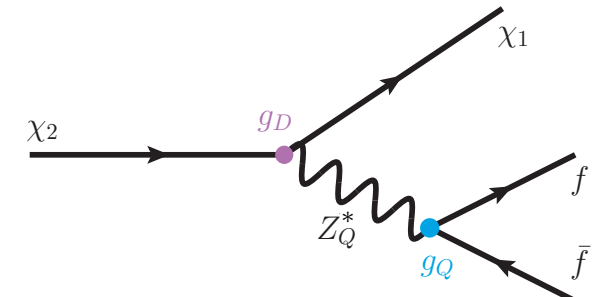
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b) $\chi_2 \chi_2 \rightarrow \chi_1 \chi_1$



c) $\chi_2 f \rightarrow \chi_1 f$



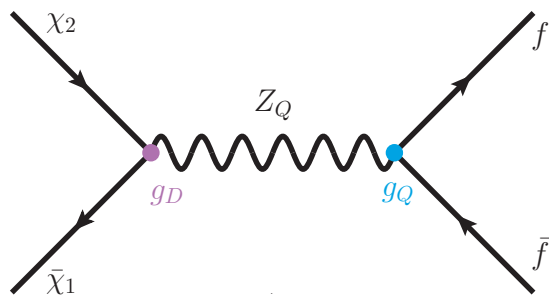
d) $\chi_2 \rightarrow \chi_1 + \text{SM}$

Inelastic Dark Matter · Relic Density Computation

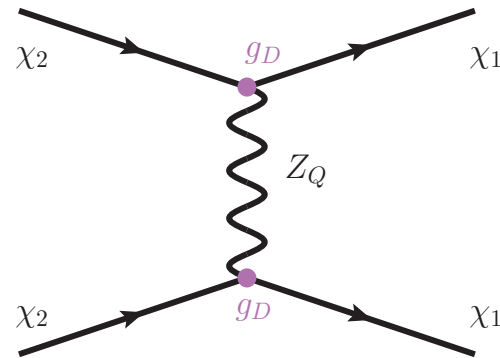
Boltzmann Equation

$$\frac{dY_{1,2}}{dx} = \frac{s}{Hx} \left[-\langle\sigma v\rangle_{12\rightarrow ff} (Y_1 Y_2 - Y_1^{\text{eq}} Y_2^{\text{eq}}) \pm 2\langle\sigma v\rangle_{22\rightarrow 11} \left((Y_2)^2 - \left(Y_1 \frac{Y_2^{\text{eq}}}{Y_1^{\text{eq}}} \right)^2 \right) \right. \\ \left. \pm \left(\langle\sigma v\rangle_{2f\rightarrow 1f} Y_f^{\text{eq}} + \frac{1}{s} \langle\Gamma\rangle_{2\rightarrow 1ff} \right) \left(Y_2 - Y_1 \frac{Y_2^{\text{eq}}}{Y_1^{\text{eq}}} \right) \right],$$

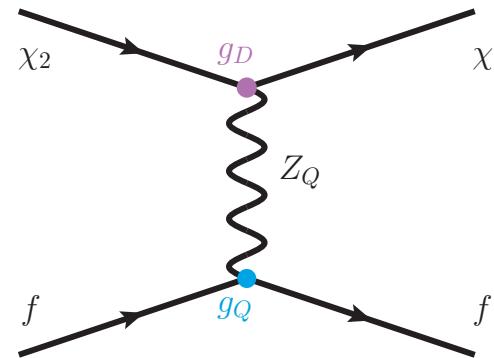
coannihilations
dominate!



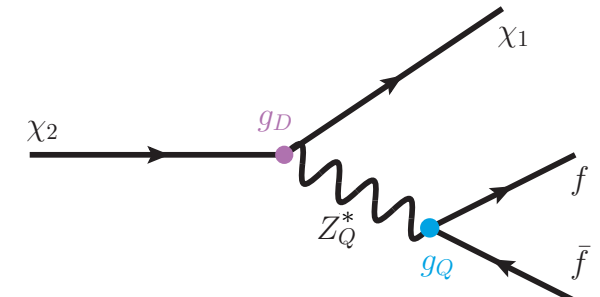
a) $\chi_1 \chi_2 \rightarrow \text{SM}$



b) $\chi_2 \chi_2 \rightarrow \chi_1 \chi_1$



c) $\chi_2 f \rightarrow \chi_1 f$

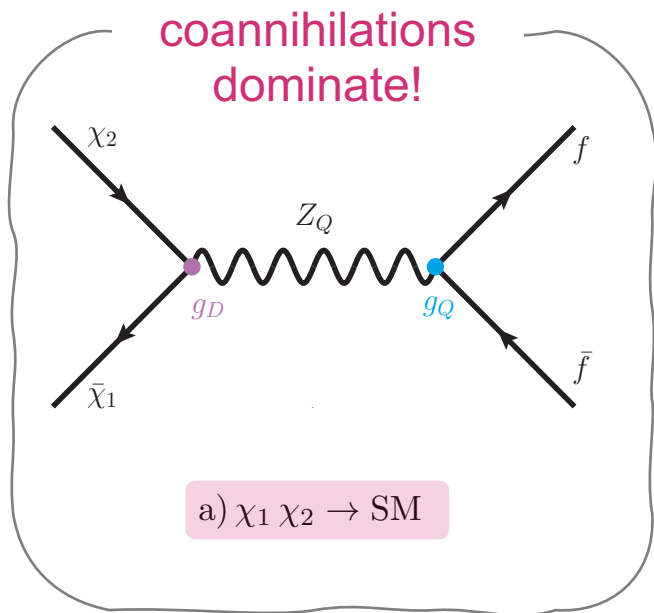


d) $\chi_2 \rightarrow \chi_1 + \text{SM}$

Inelastic Dark Matter · Relic Density Computation

Boltzmann Equation

$$\frac{dY_{1,2}}{dx} = \frac{s}{Hx} \left[-\langle\sigma v\rangle_{12\rightarrow ff} (Y_1 Y_2 - Y_1^{\text{eq}} Y_2^{\text{eq}}) \pm 2 \langle\sigma v\rangle_{22\rightarrow 11} \left((Y_2)^2 - \left(Y_1 \frac{Y_2^{\text{eq}}}{Y_1^{\text{eq}}} \right)^2 \right) \right. \\ \left. \pm \left(\langle\sigma v\rangle_{2f\rightarrow 1f} Y_f^{\text{eq}} + \frac{1}{s} \langle\Gamma\rangle_{2\rightarrow 1ff} \right) \left(Y_2 - Y_1 \frac{Y_2^{\text{eq}}}{Y_1^{\text{eq}}} \right) \right],$$



we can simplify by considering

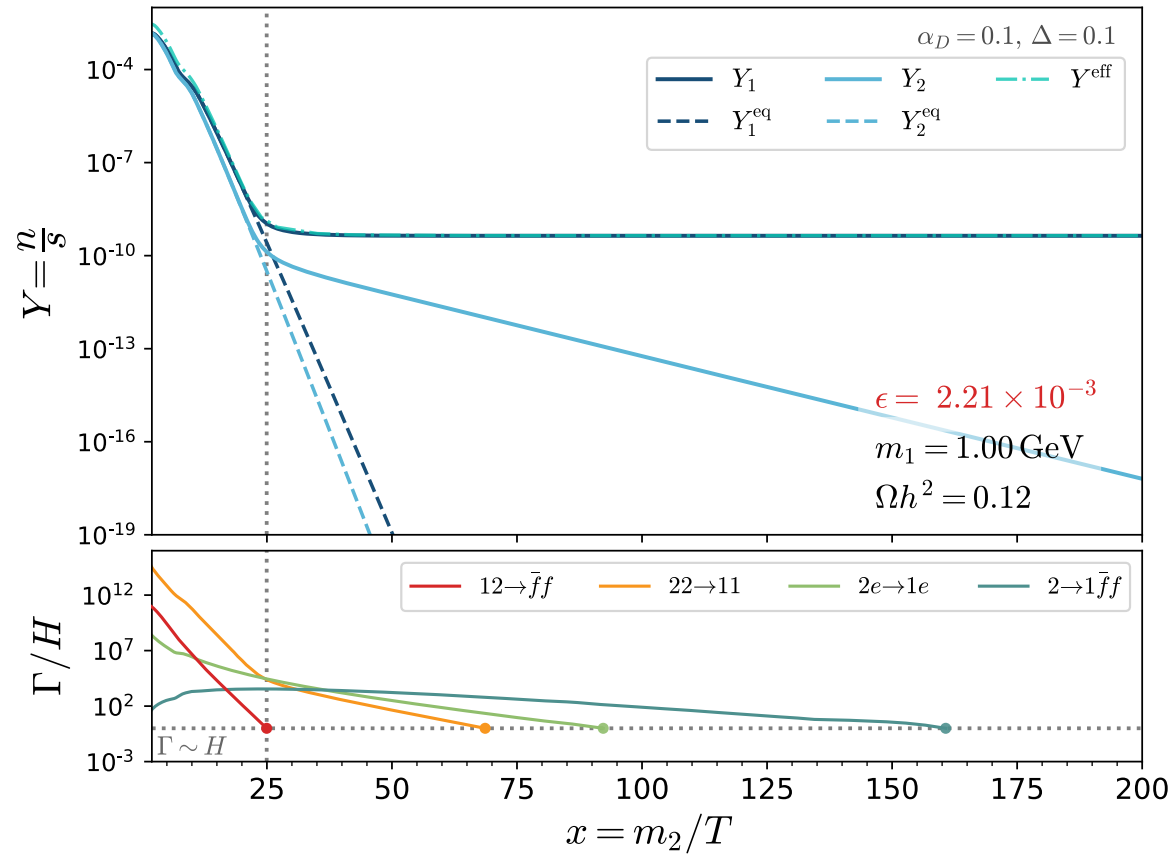
$$n = n_1 + n_2$$

$$\frac{dY}{dx} = -2 \frac{s}{xH} \langle\sigma v\rangle_{\text{eff}} (Y^2 - Y_{\text{eq}}^2)$$

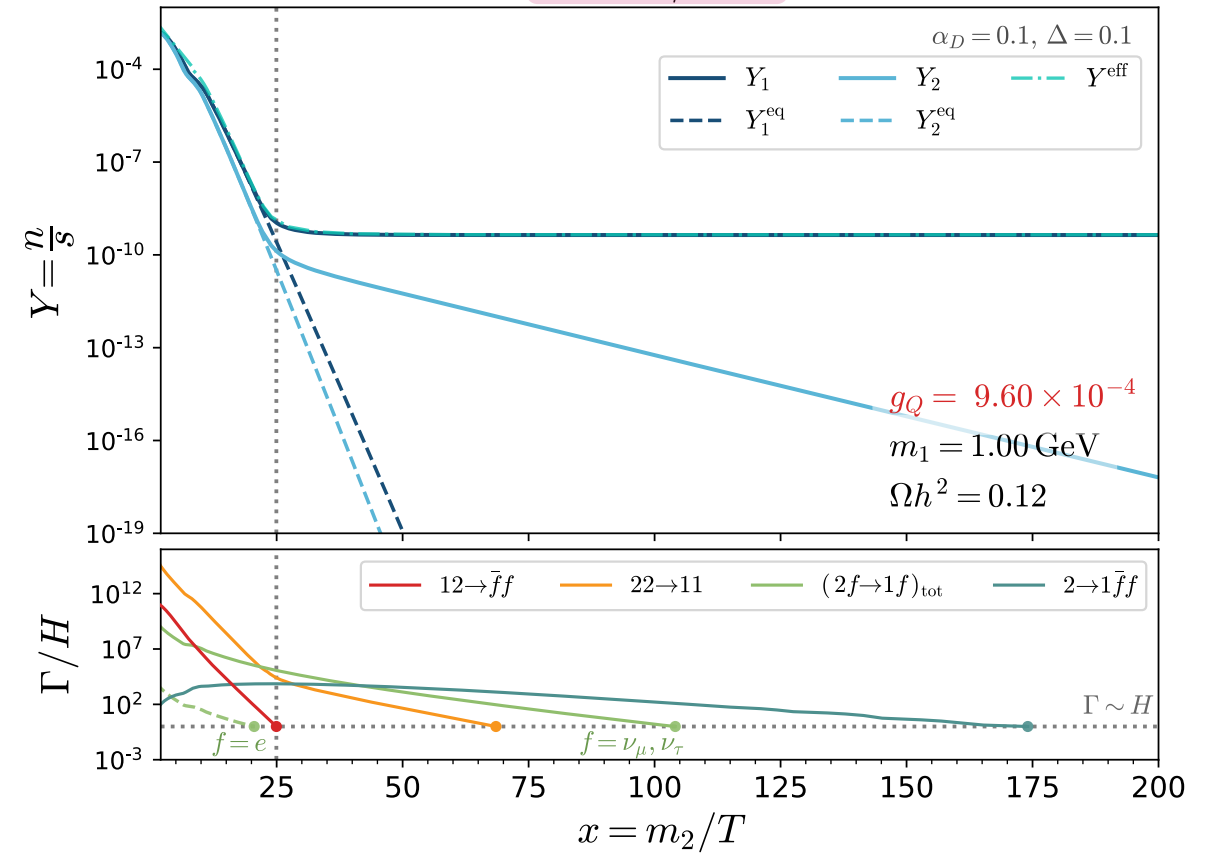
$$\langle\sigma v\rangle_{\text{eff}} = \langle\sigma v\rangle_{12\rightarrow ff} \frac{n_1^{\text{eq}} n_2^{\text{eq}}}{(n^{\text{eq}})^2}$$

Inelastic Dark Matter · Relic Density Computation

iDM

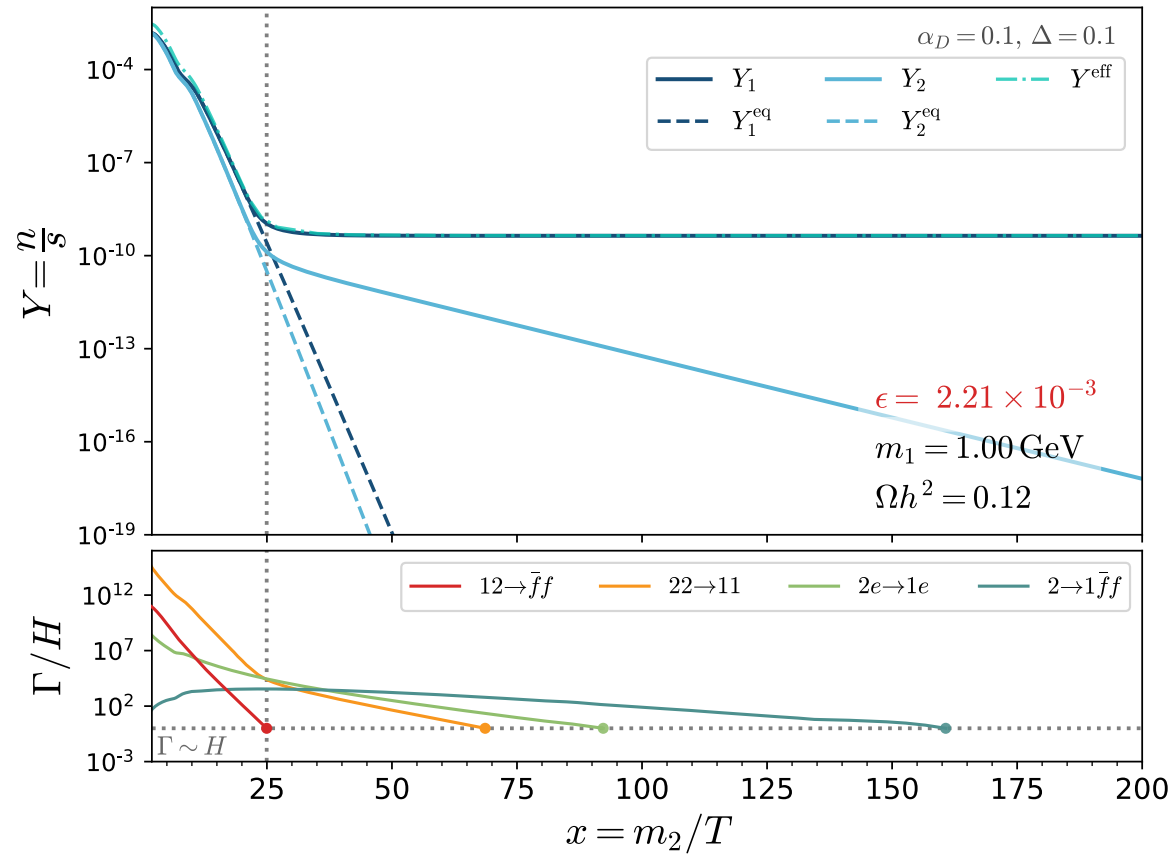


iDM _{$L_\mu - L_\tau$}

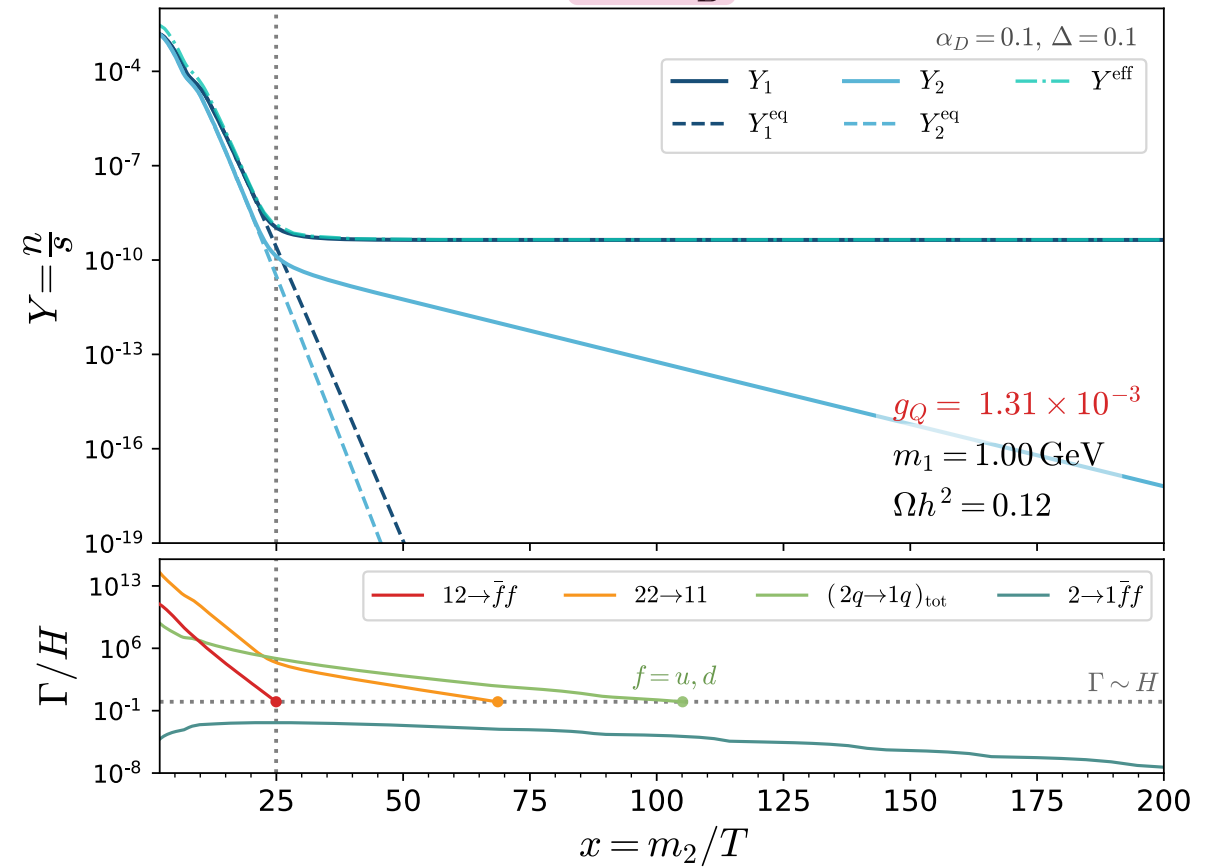


Inelastic Dark Matter · Relic Density Computation

iDM



iDM_B



Inelastic Dark Matter · ReD-DeLiVeR code

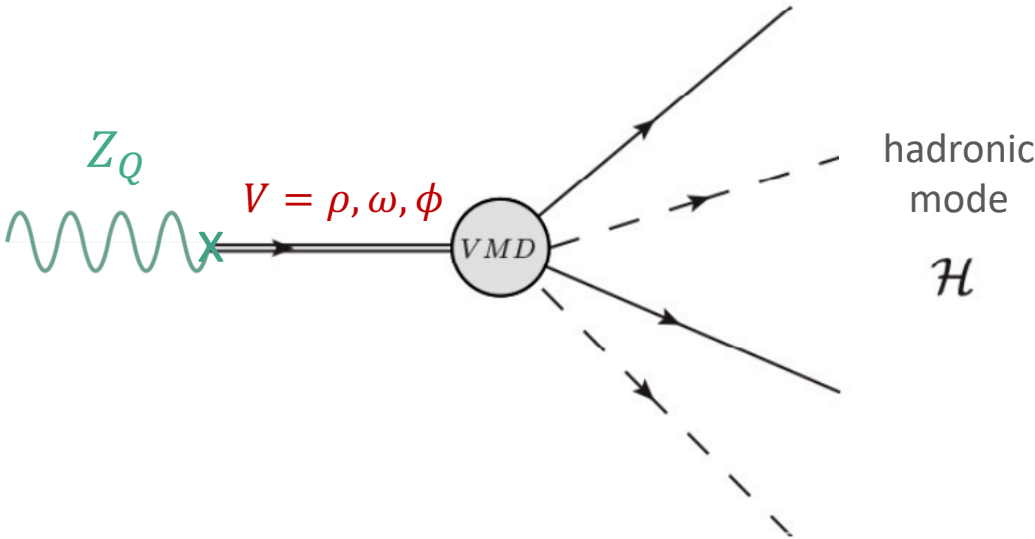
ReD-DeLiVeR (Relic Density with DeLiVeR)

- update of the previous python package **DELIVER** (**Decays of Light Vectors Revised**), which can be used to compute decay rates and branching ratios for **user-defined $U(1)_Q$ charges**,
- **key feature**: includes a complete set of **hadronic decays** (20 channels)

channel	resonances
$\pi\gamma$	$\rho, \omega, \omega', \omega'', \phi$
$\pi\pi$	$\rho, \rho', \dots$
3π	$\rho, \rho'', \omega, \omega', \omega'', \phi$
4π	$\rho, \rho', \rho'', \rho'''$
KK	$\rho, \dots, \omega, \dots, \phi, \dots$
$KK\pi$	$\rho, \rho', \rho'', \phi, \phi', \phi''$

channel	resonances
$\eta\gamma$	$\rho, \rho', \omega, \phi$
$\eta\pi\pi$	ρ, ρ', ρ''
$\omega\pi \rightarrow \pi\pi\gamma$	ρ, ρ', ρ''
$\omega\pi\pi$	ω''
$\phi\pi$	ρ, ρ'
$\eta'\pi\pi$	ρ'''
$\eta\omega$	ω', ω''
$\eta\phi$	ϕ', ϕ''
$p\bar{p}/n\bar{n}$	$\rho, \rho', \dots, \omega, \omega', \dots$
$\phi\pi\pi$	ϕ', ϕ''
$K^*(892)K\pi$	ρ'', ϕ'
6π	ρ'''

ALF, P. Reimitz, R.Z. Funchal [JHEP 04 (2022)119]

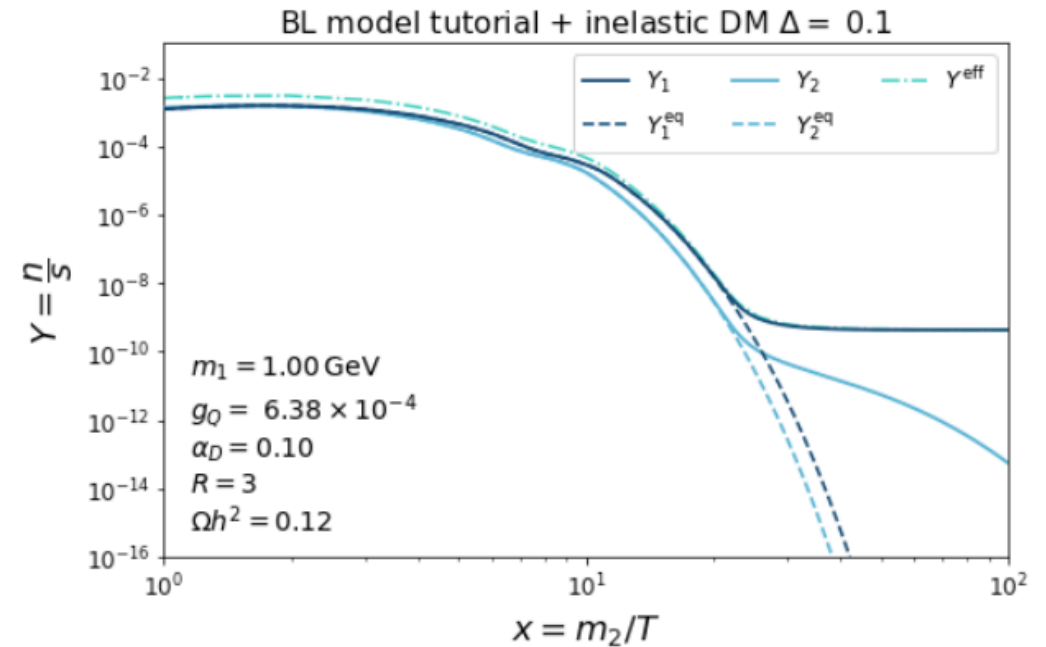


Inelastic Dark Matter · ReD-DeLiVeR code

ReD-DeLiVeR (Relic Density with DeLiVeR)

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- **new version**:
 - inclusion of DM candidates
 - computation of **relic density** and **rates**

simplified DM models
inelastic DM

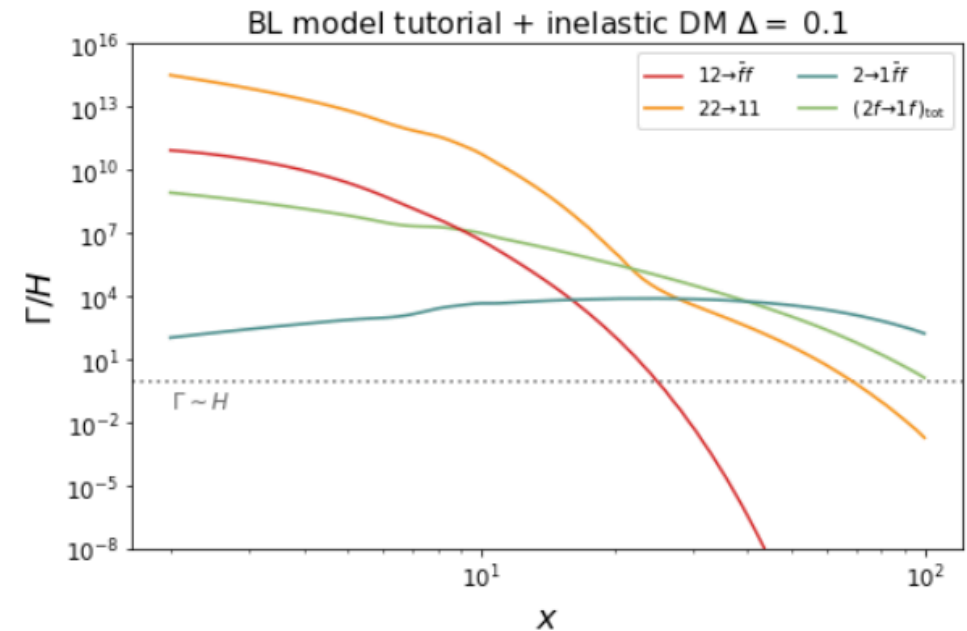


Inelastic Dark Matter · ReD-DeLiVeR code

ReD-DeLiVeR (Relic Density with DeLiVeR)

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Inelastic Dark Matter · ReD-DeLiVeR code

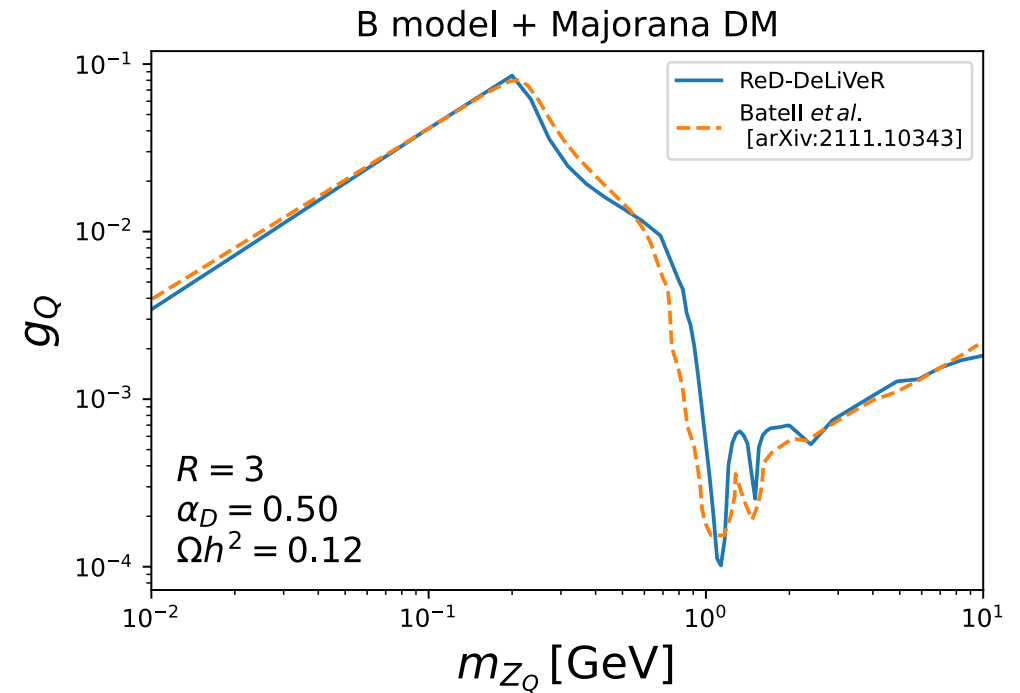
ReD-DeLiVeR (Relic Density with DeLiVeR)

→ update of the previous python package **DELIVER** (**Decays of Light Vectors Revised**), which can be used to compute decay rates and branching ratios for **user-defined $U(1)_Q$ charges**,

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inelastic DM



specially for B-coupled models, it is very important to compute correctly the hadronic contributions

Inelastic Dark Matter · ReD-DeLiVeR code

ReD-DeLiVeR (Relic Density with DeLiVeR)

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inelastic DM

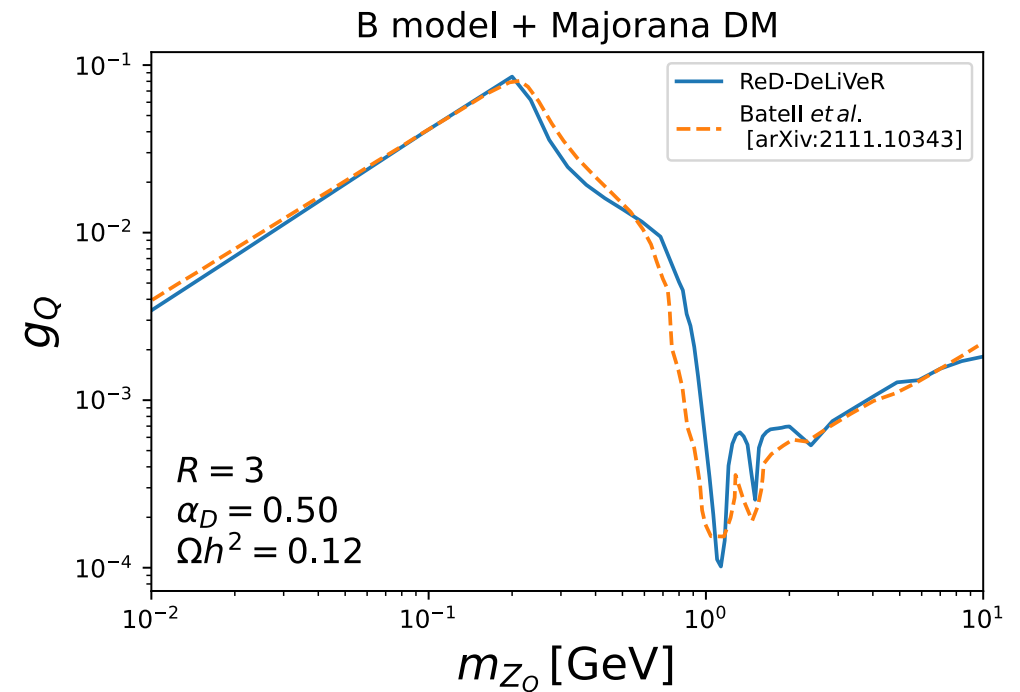
→ **publicly available** on GitHub together with a **Tutorial!**

<https://github.com/anafoguel/ReD-DeLiVeR>

ReD-DeLiVeR

by Ana Luisa Foguel, Peter Reimitz, and Renata Zukanovich Funchal

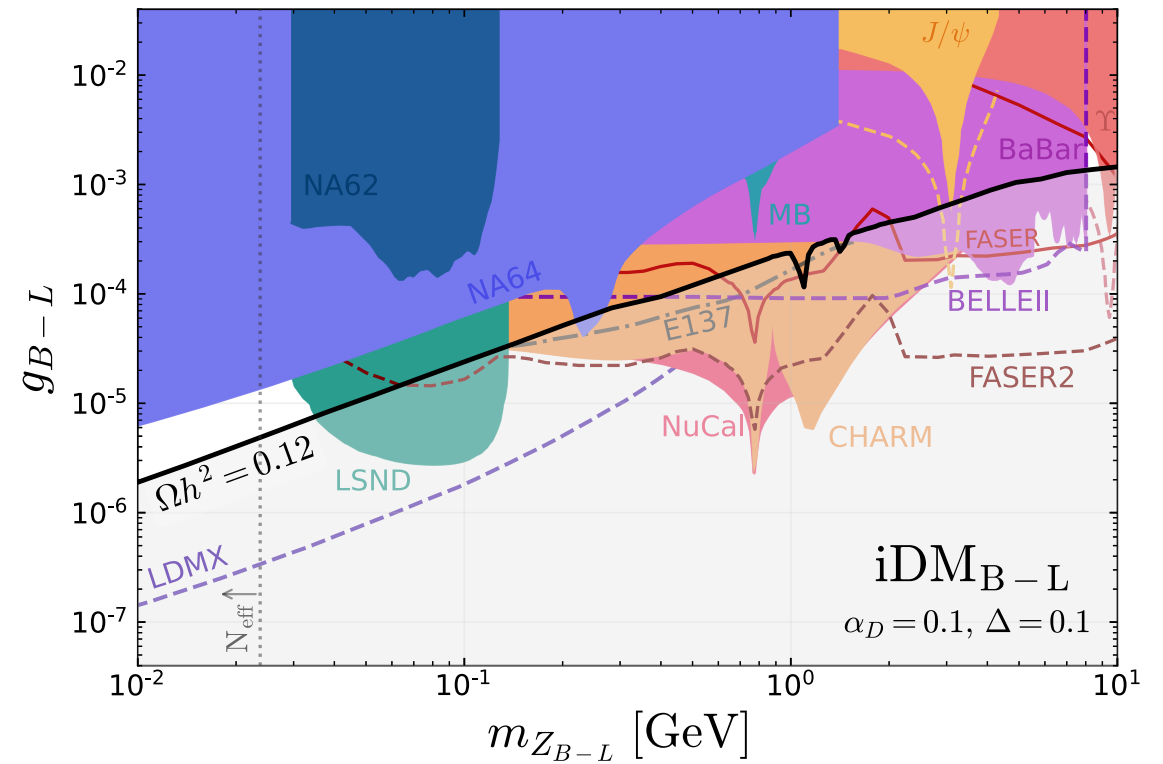
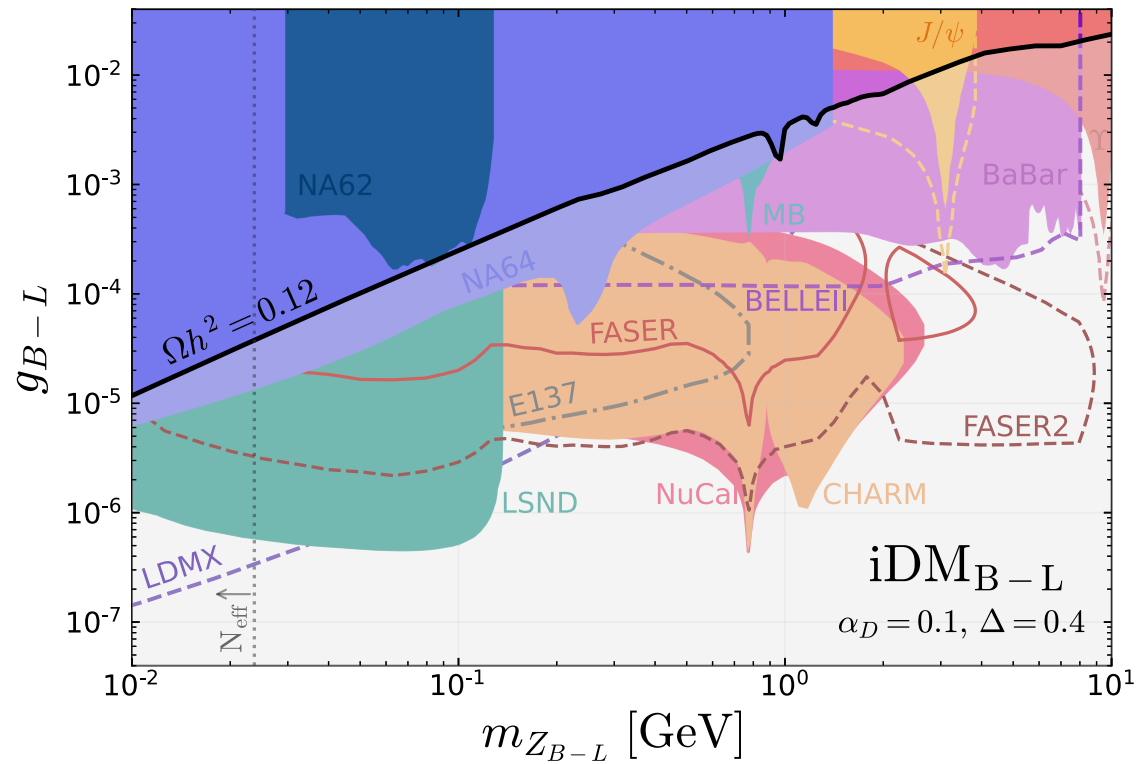
arXiv: 2410.00881



specially for B-coupled models, it is very important to compute correctly the hadronic contributions

Inelastic Dark Matter · Bounds

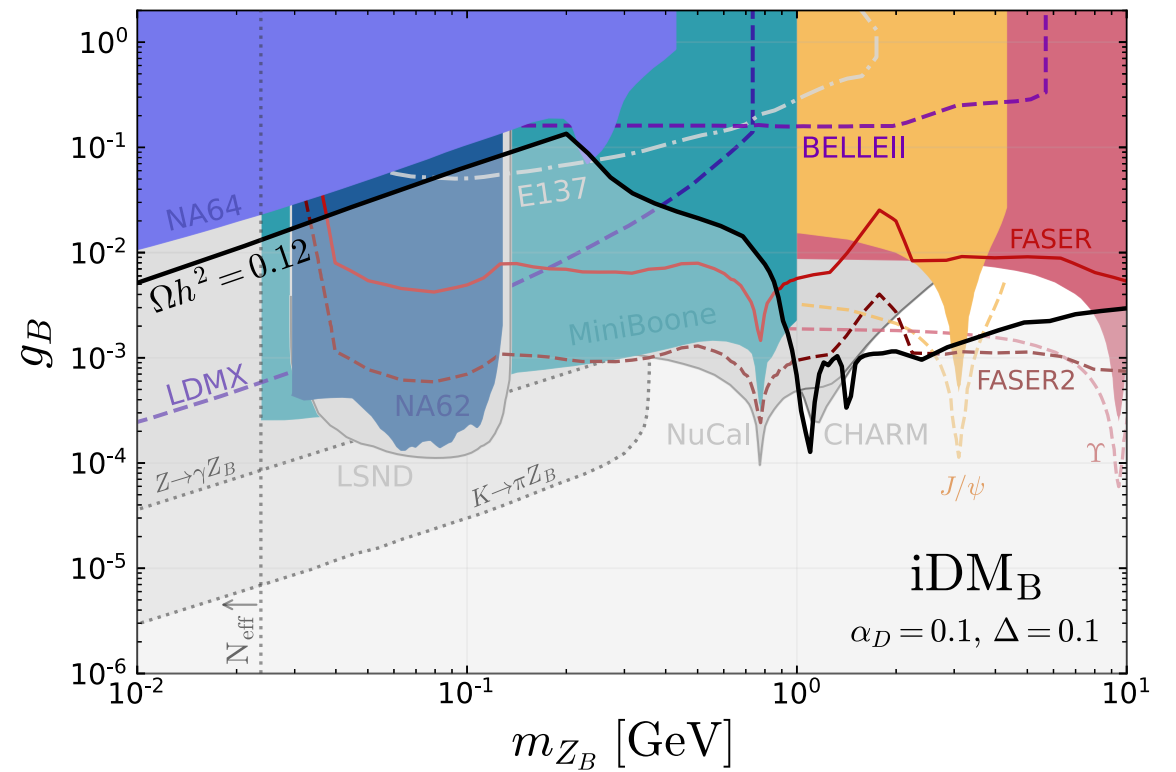
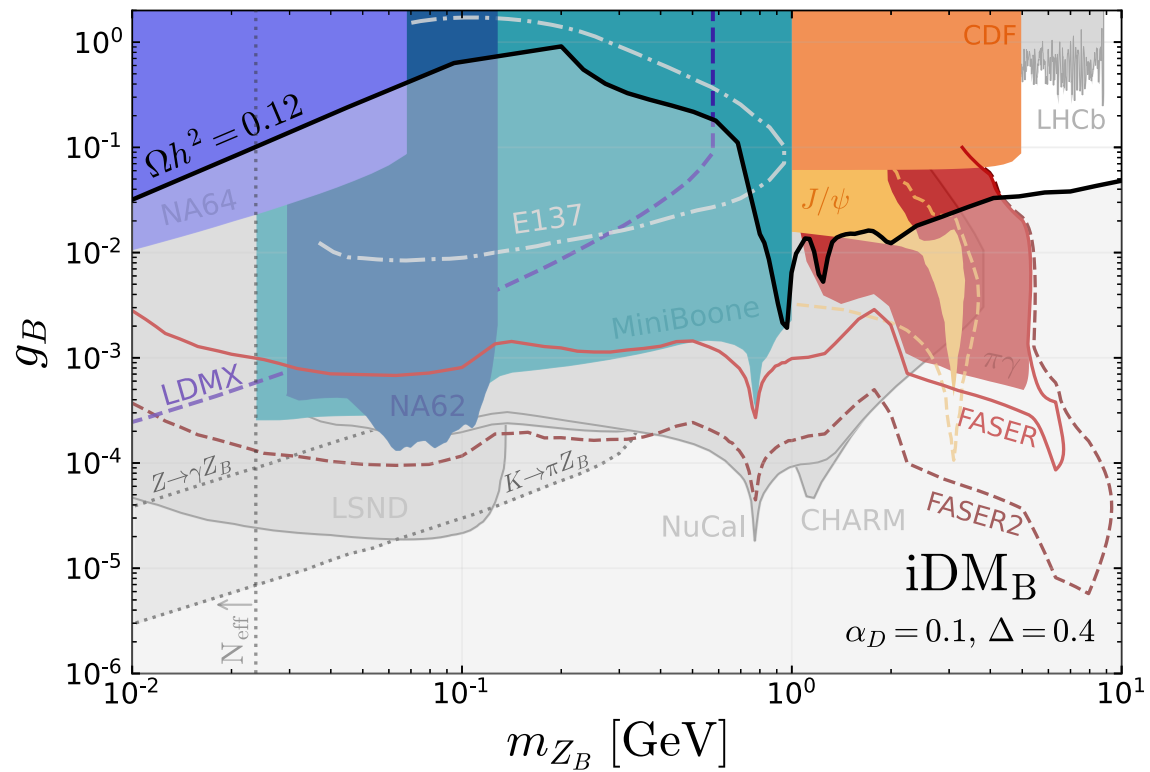
→ $i\text{DM}_{B-L}$



Inelastic Dark Matter · Bounds

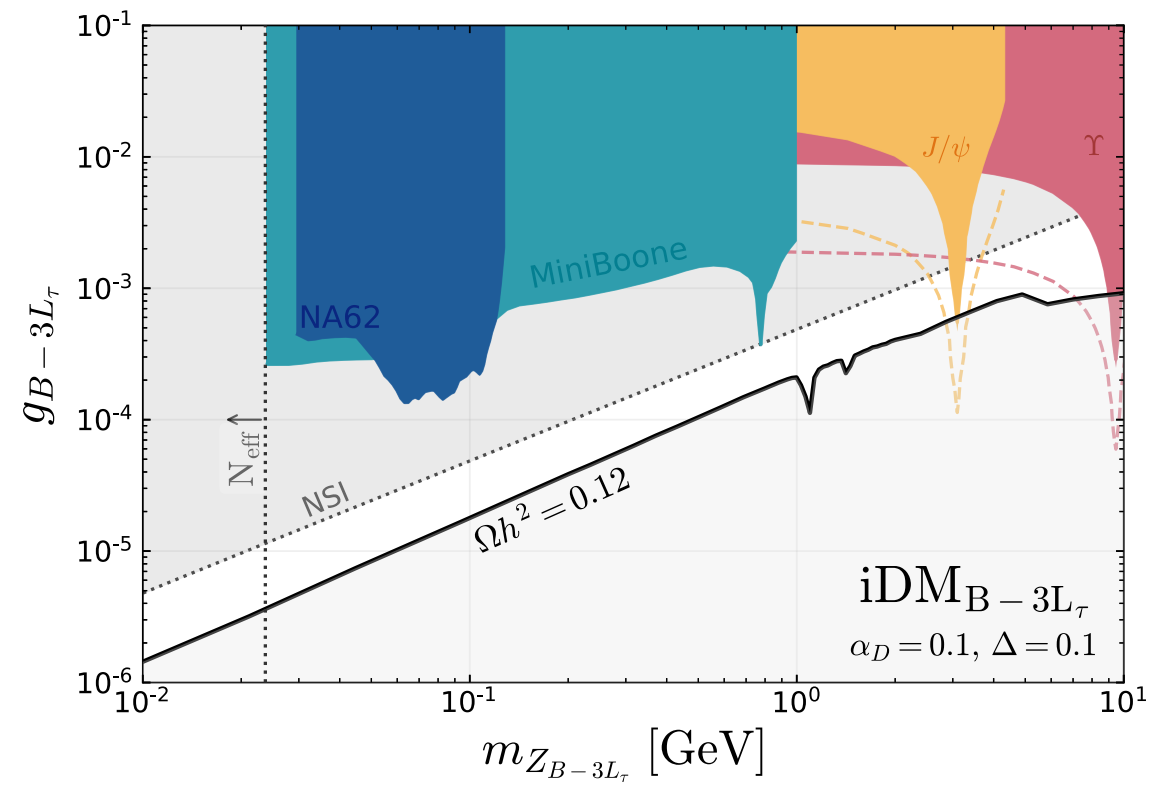
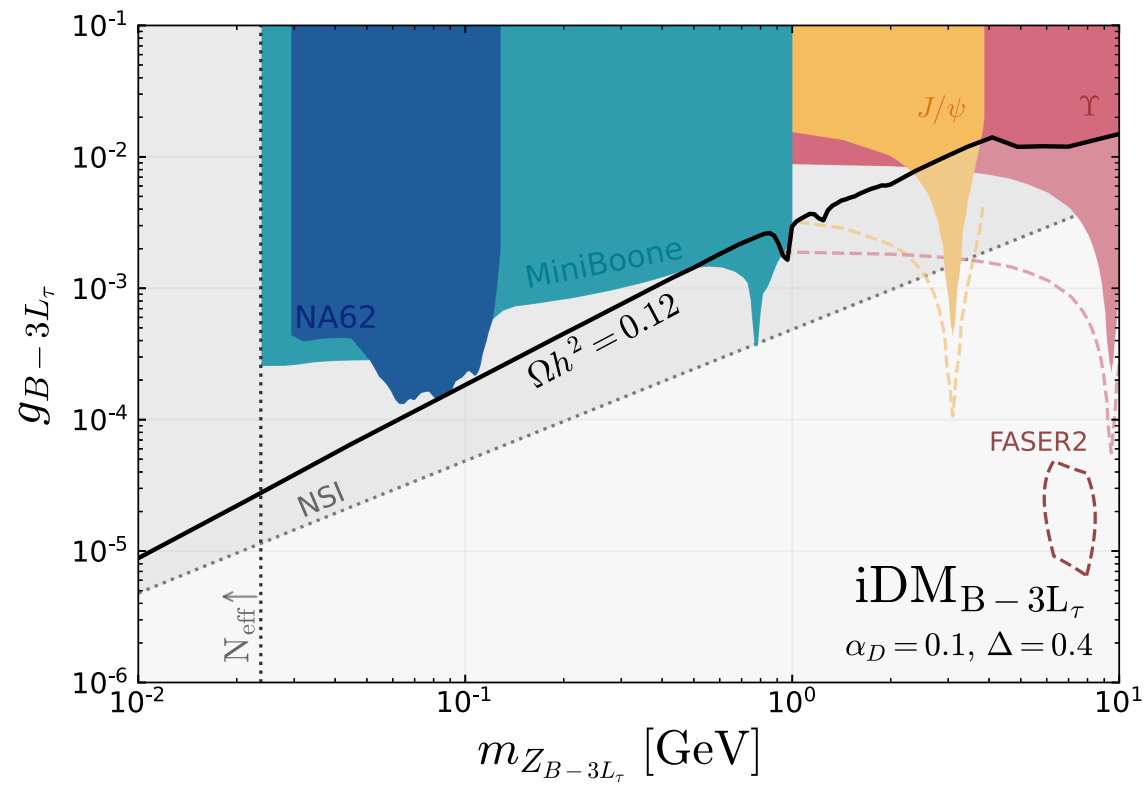


$i\text{DM}_B$



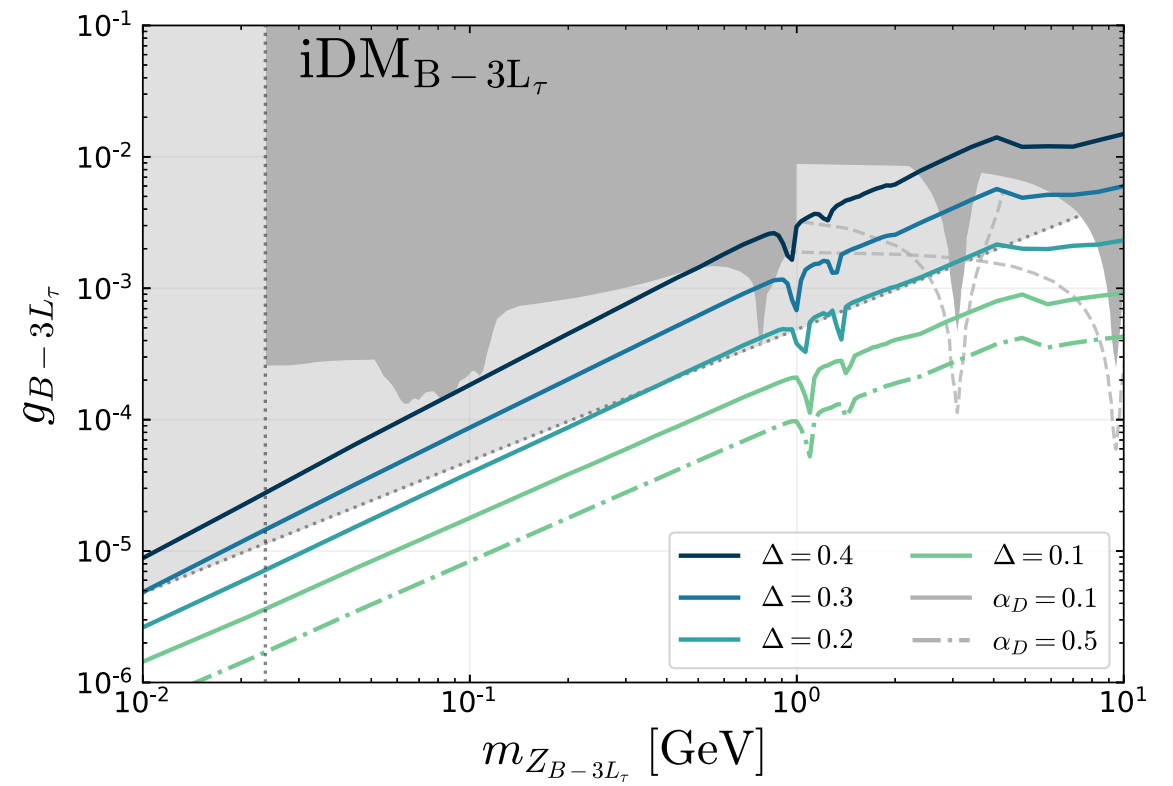
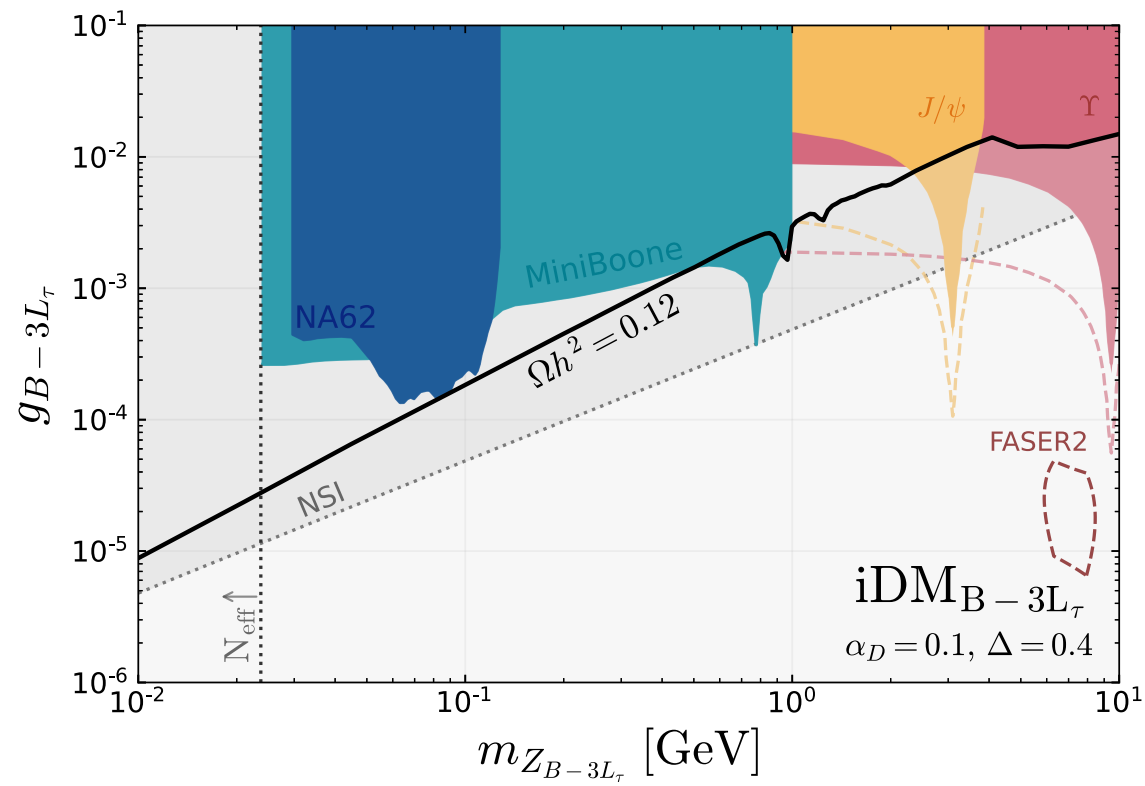
Inelastic Dark Matter · Bounds

→ $i\text{DM}_{B-3L_\tau}$



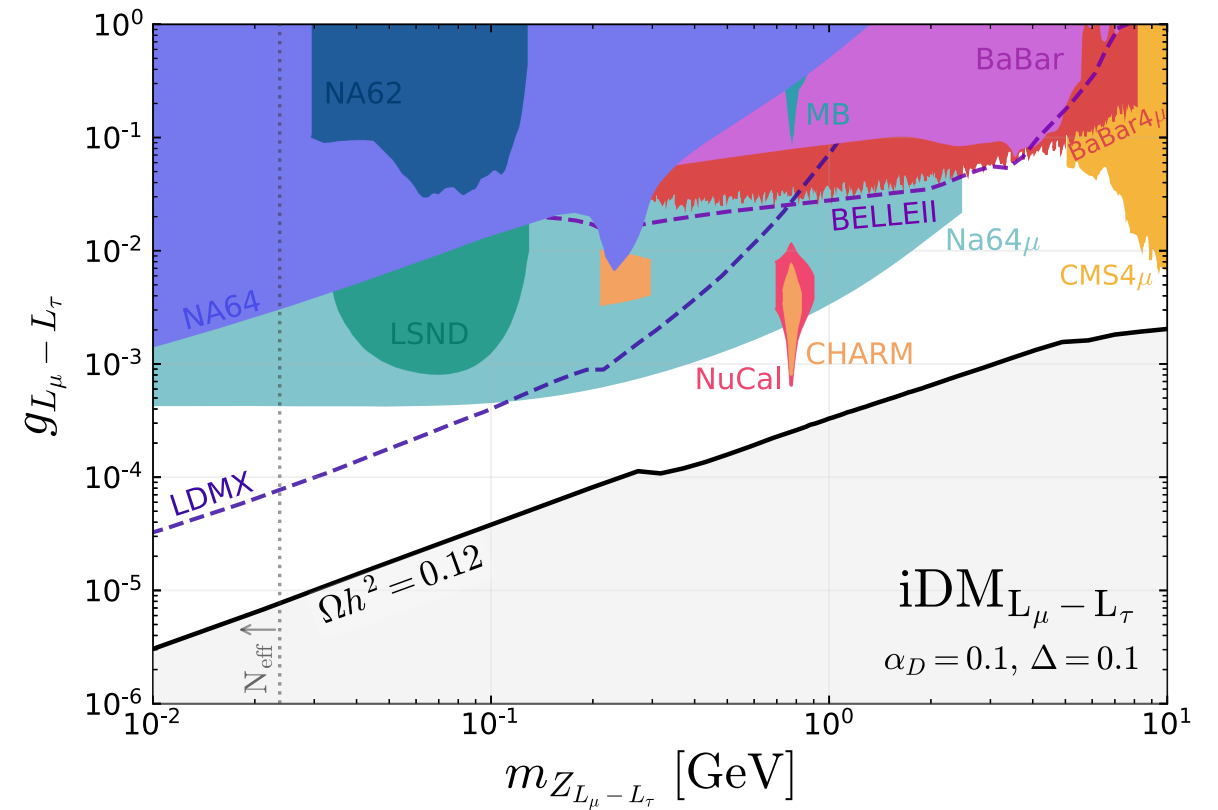
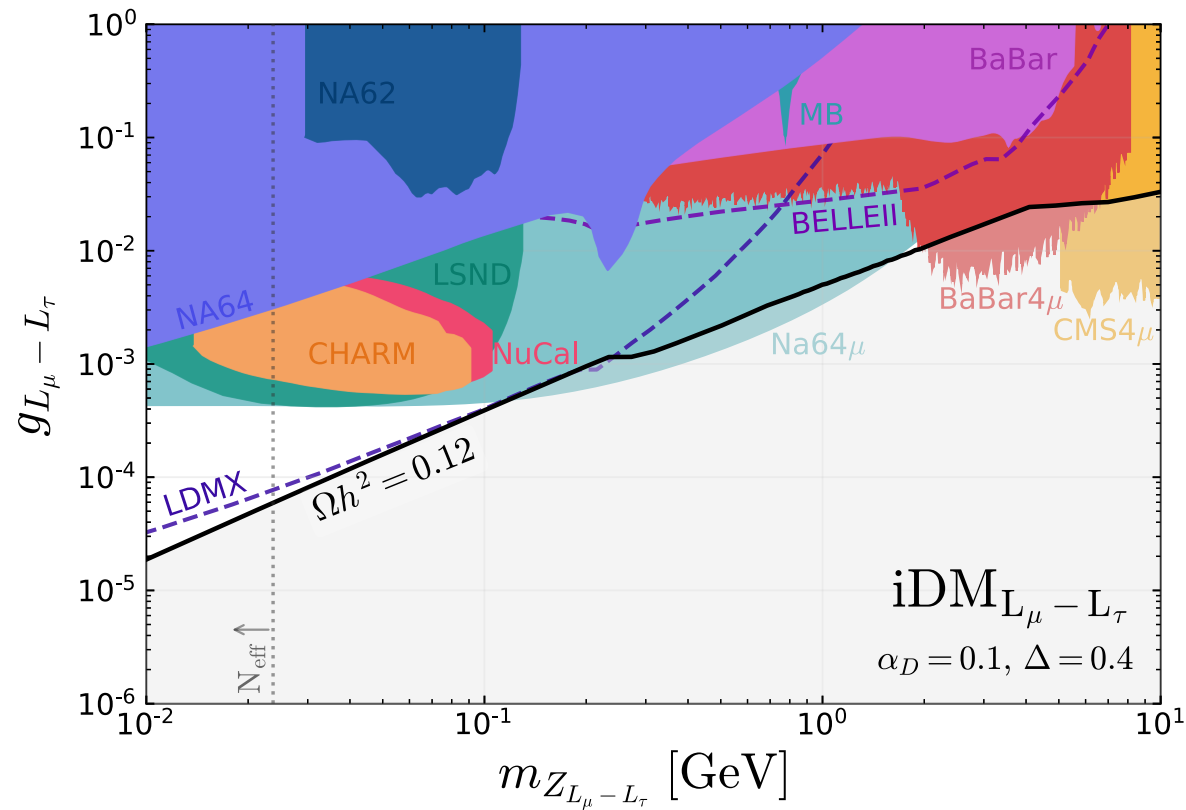
Inelastic Dark Matter · Bounds

→ iDM_{B-3L_τ}



Inelastic Dark Matter · Bounds

→ iDM $_{L_\mu - L_\tau}$



Conclusions

- **Light Feebly Interacting Particles** can shed light in several unanswered questions of the SM
- As experiments increase their **luminosities**, and we enter the **intensity frontier** era of particle physics, we increase the capabilities to probe new light sectors.
- As a guiding principle, we consider different **portals** between the **Dark Sector** and the **SM**
- In this work we considered a **vector portal** to a fermionic **inelastic Dark Matter** sector

thermal relics evade indirect and direct detection evade CMB bounds

general vector mediators

iDM_Q

- We developed a code that computes the relic density **ReD-DeLiVeR**
- With general mediators, we showed that we can **unlock new regions of the parameter space** of the vanilla dark photon model

$$\curvearrowright B - 3L_\tau \quad \curvearrowright L_\mu - L_\tau$$

*Thank you for your
kind attention!*

BACKUP

Inelastic Dark Matter

DM Thermal Freeze-out · WIMP miracle

We know that freeze-out happens when $\Gamma \sim H$

$$m_\chi \sim \alpha_{\text{eff}} \sqrt{T_{\text{eq}} M_{\text{Pl}}} \sim \alpha_{\text{eff}} \times 30 \text{ TeV}$$

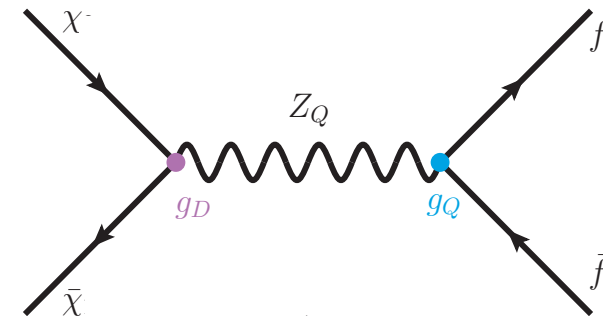
WIMP miracle

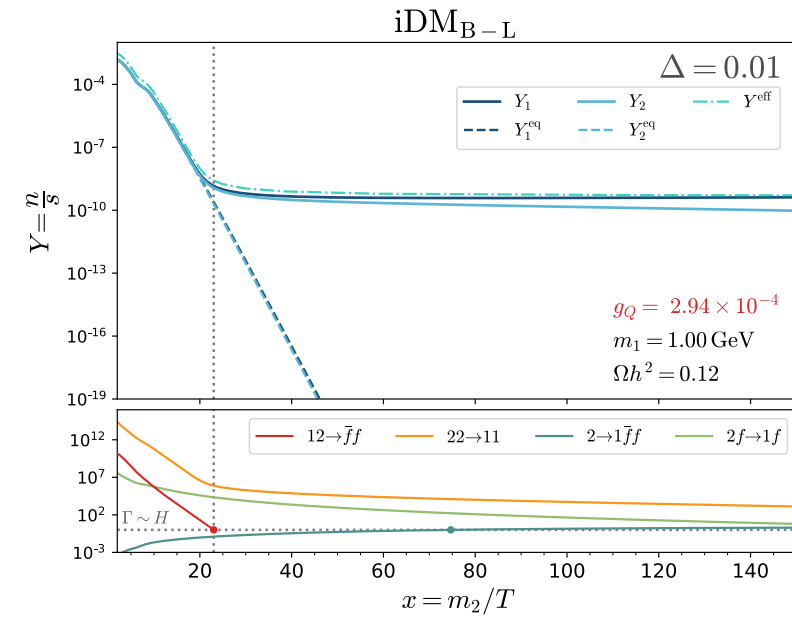
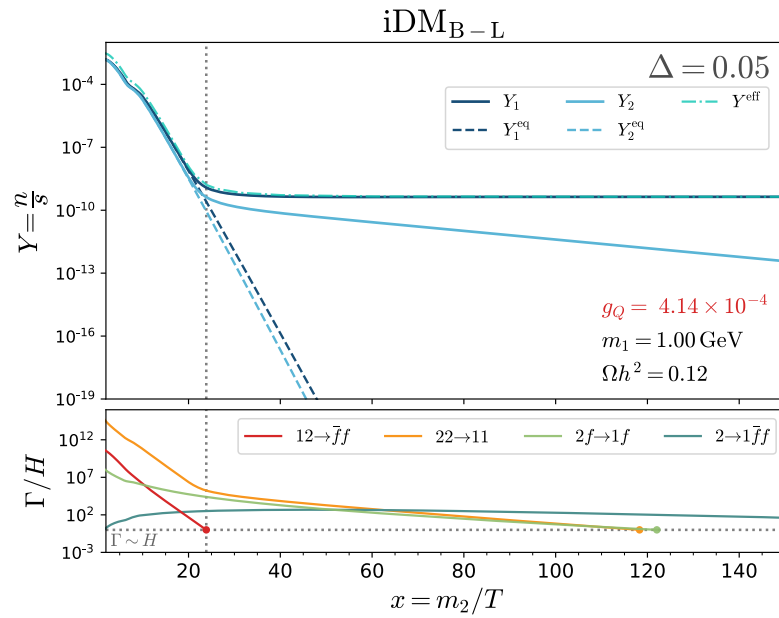
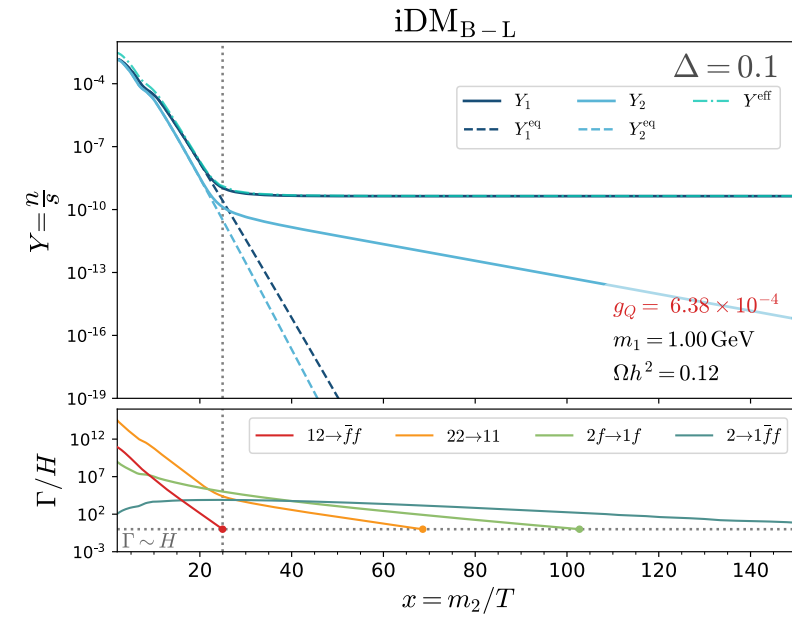
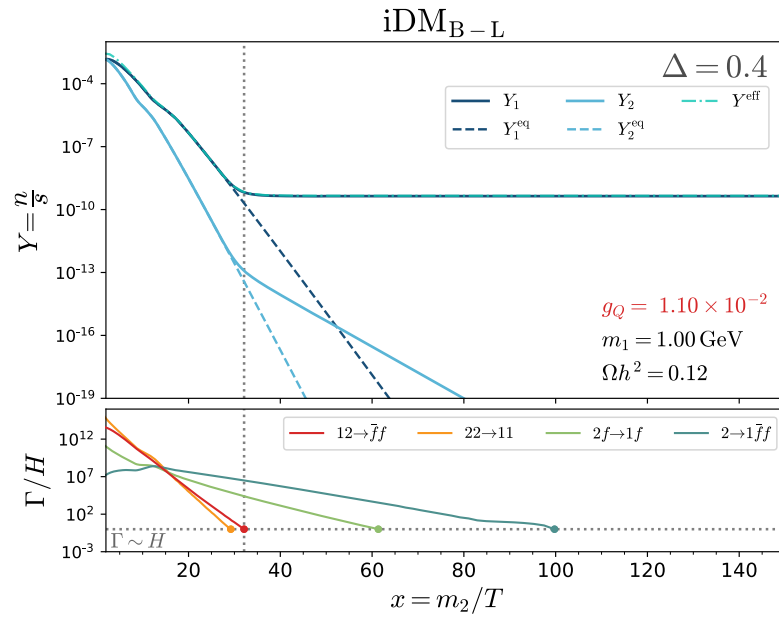
↪ For couplings similar to the electroweak coupling ($\alpha_{\text{eff}} \sim 10^{-2}$) $\Rightarrow$ EW scale emerges naturally

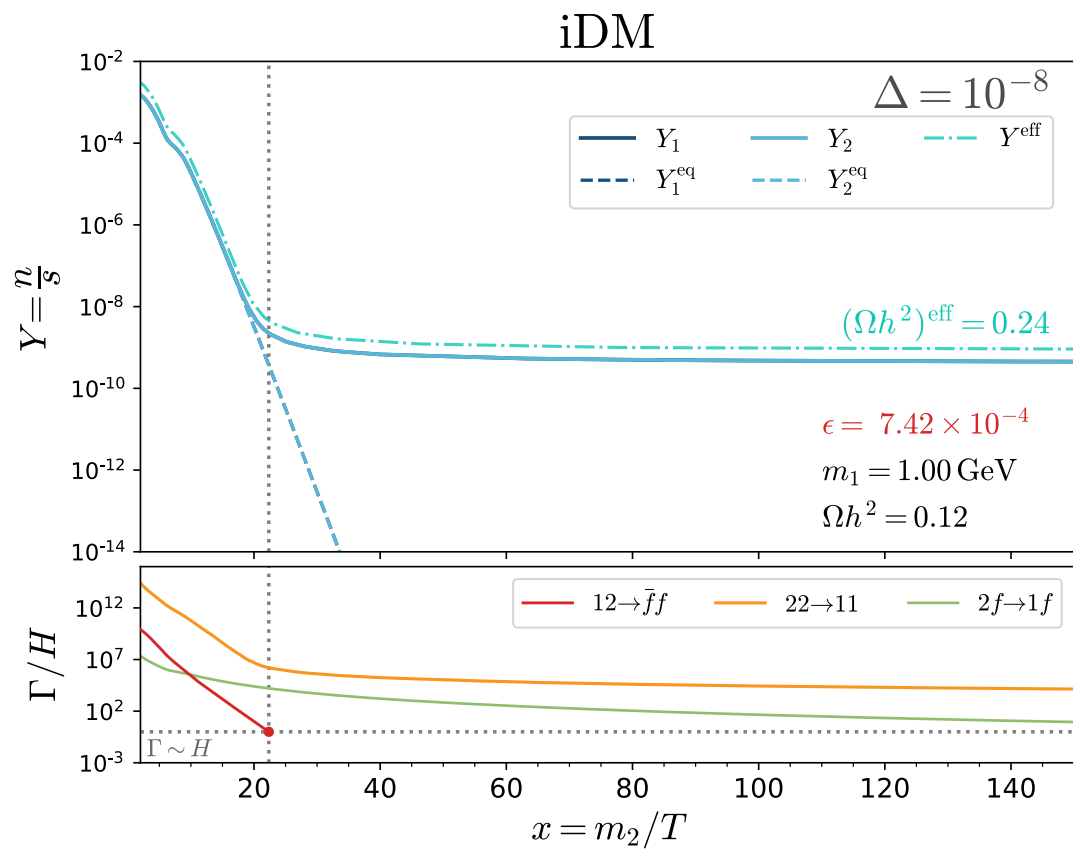
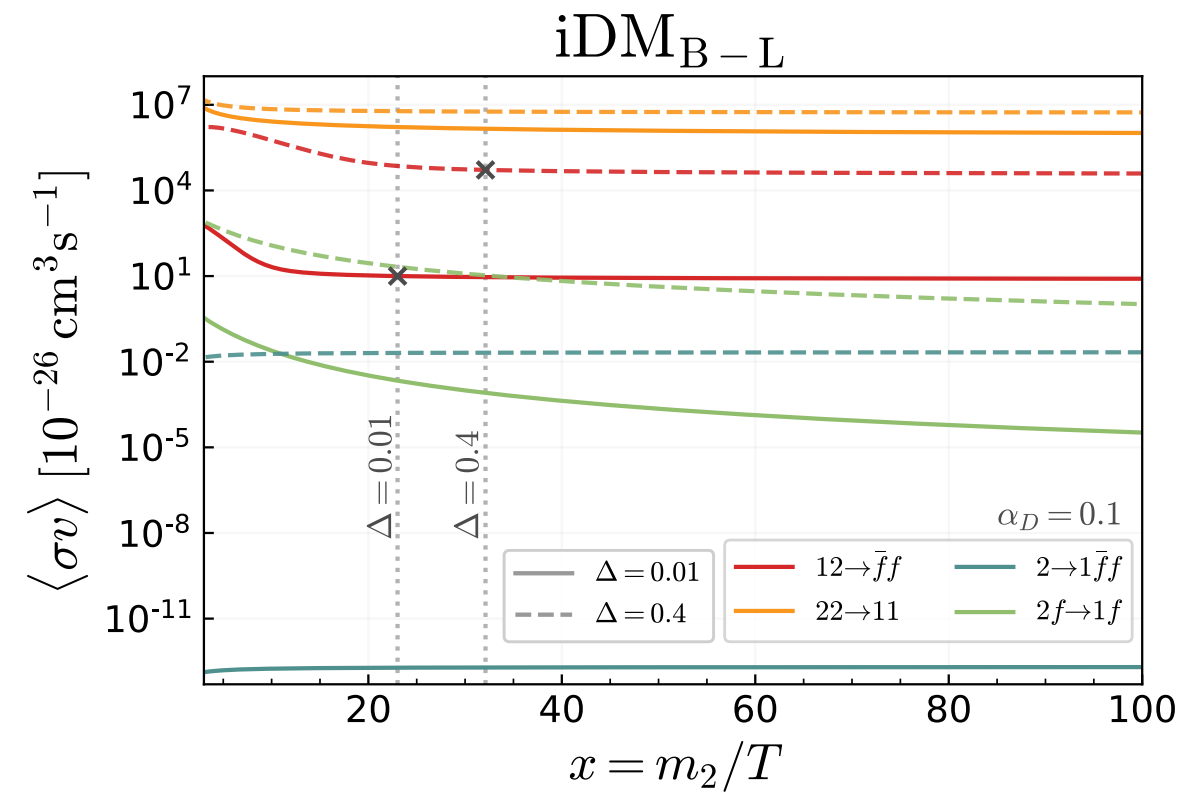
However, this also implies that

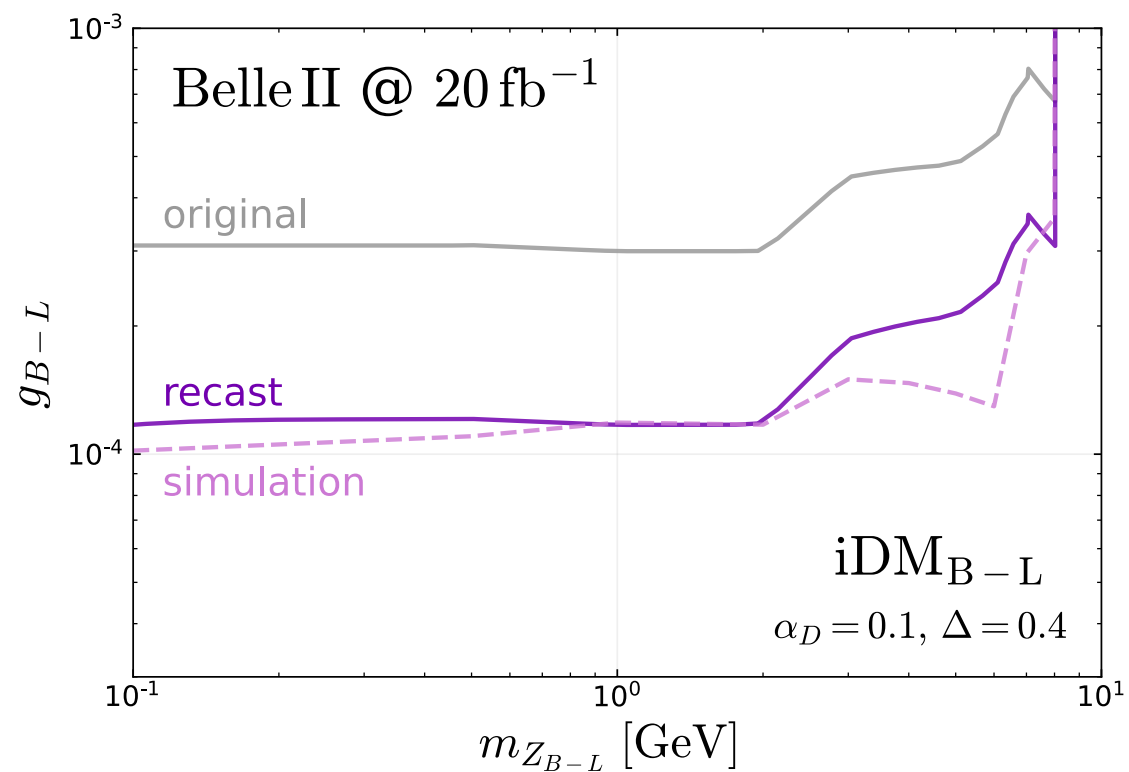
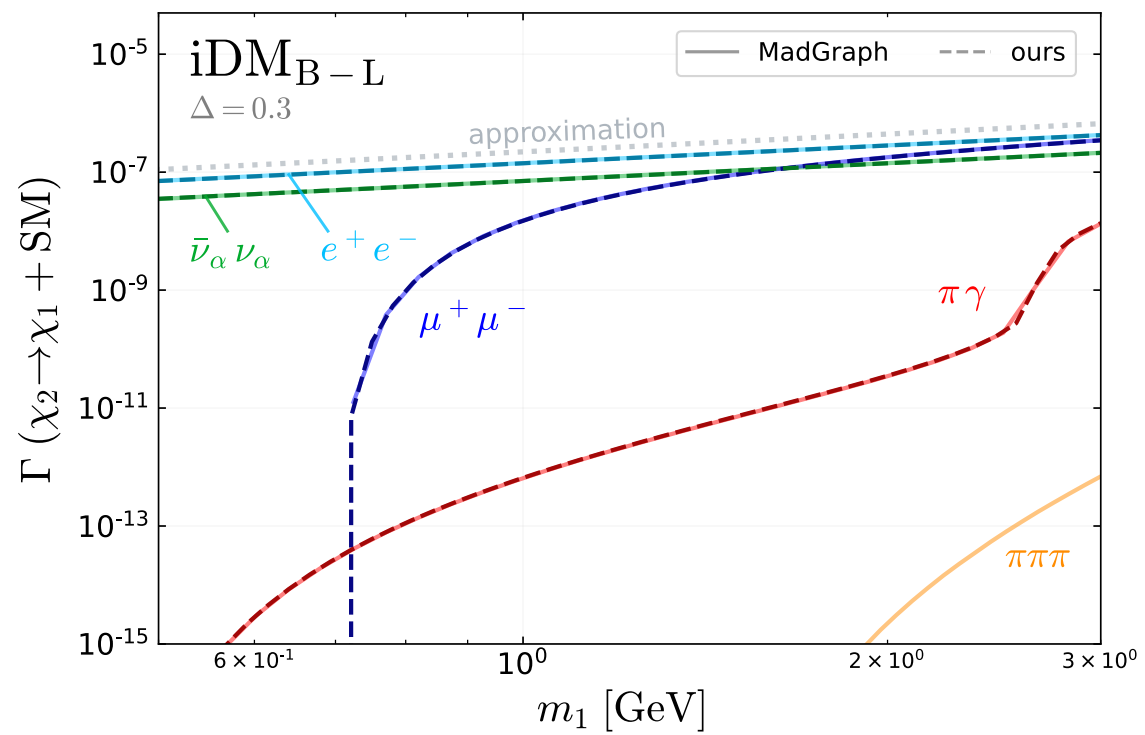
$$m_{\text{DM}} \gtrsim \frac{m_Z^2}{(T_{\text{eq}} m_{\text{Pl}})^{1/2}} \sim \text{GeV}.$$

Hence, sub-GeV DM motivates the presence of new light mediators

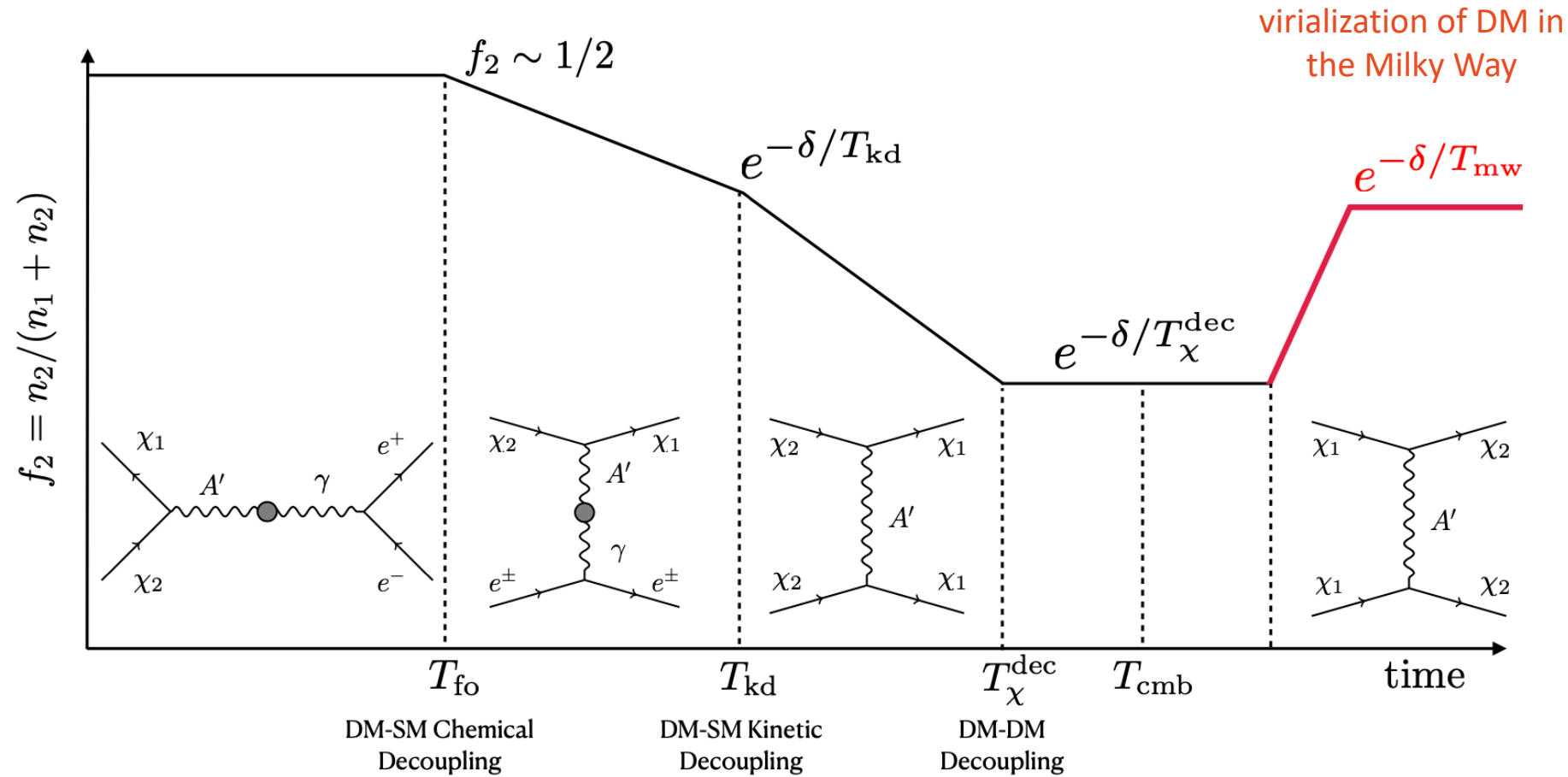








Inelastic Dark Matter



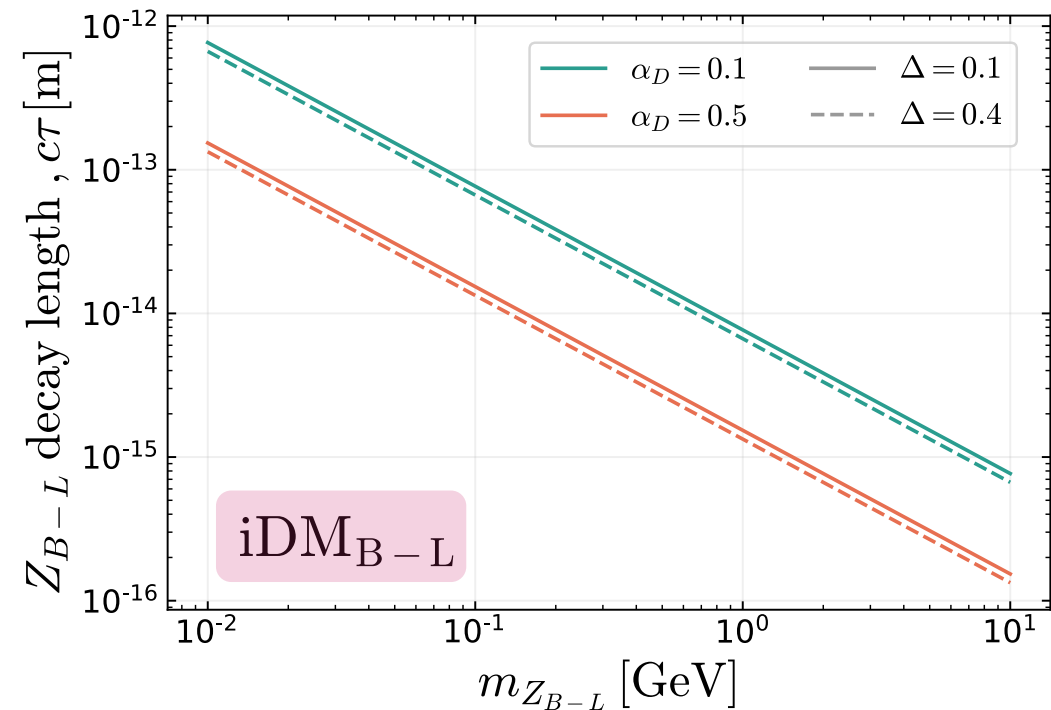
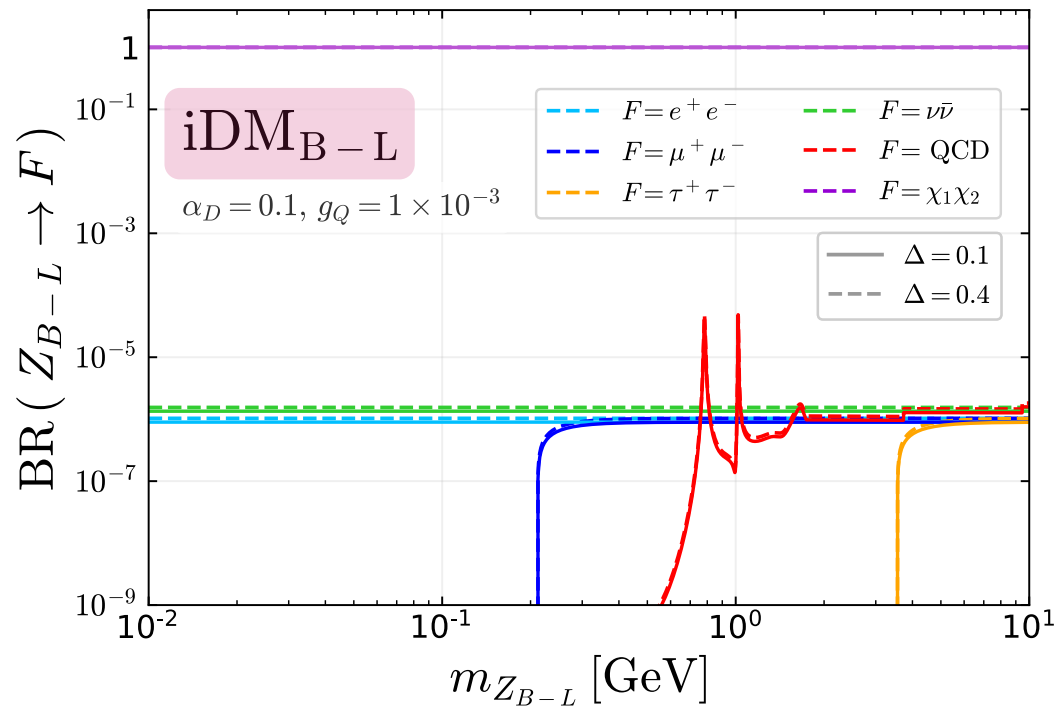
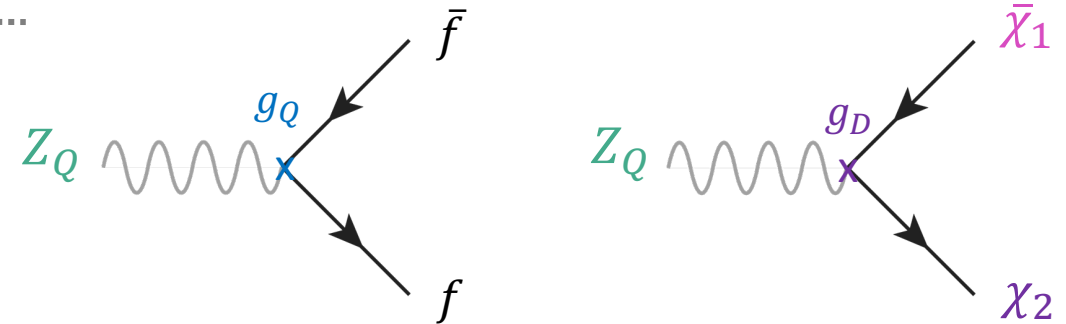
arXiv:2311.00032v1 [hep-ph]

Inelastic Dark Matter · Decay Rates

Decay rates · Mediator

→ Hierarchy $m_{Z_Q} > m_1 + m_2$

→ Limit $g_D \gg g_Q$

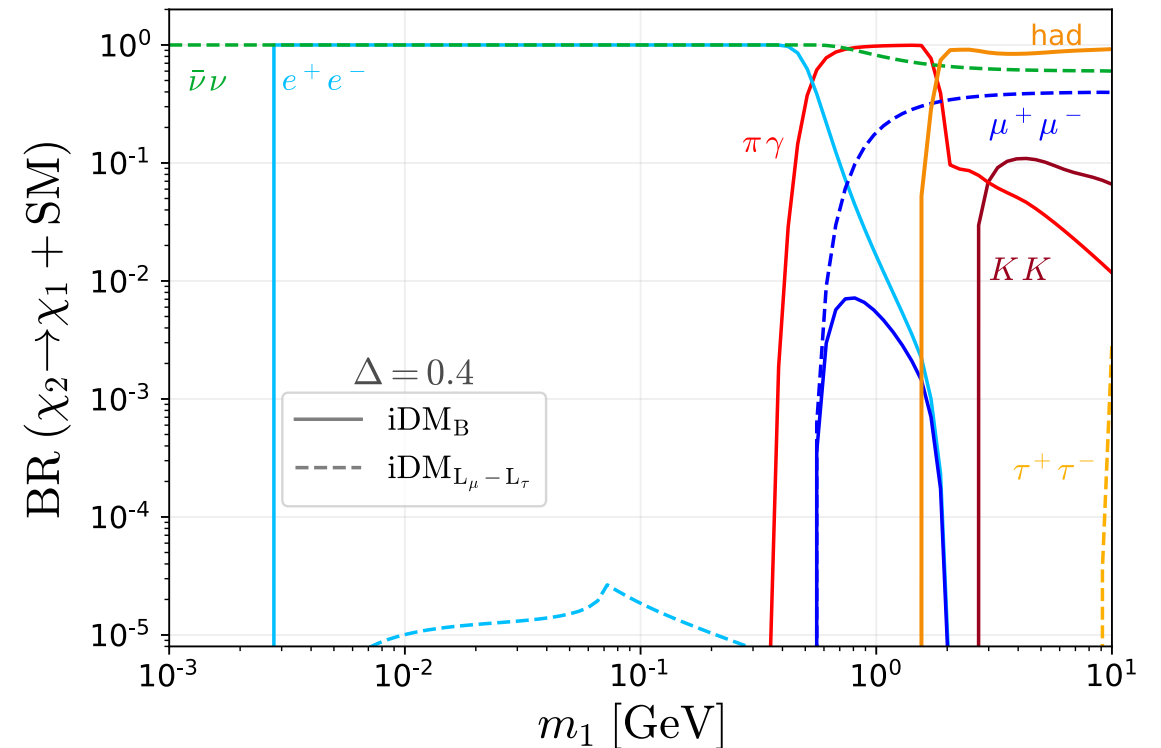
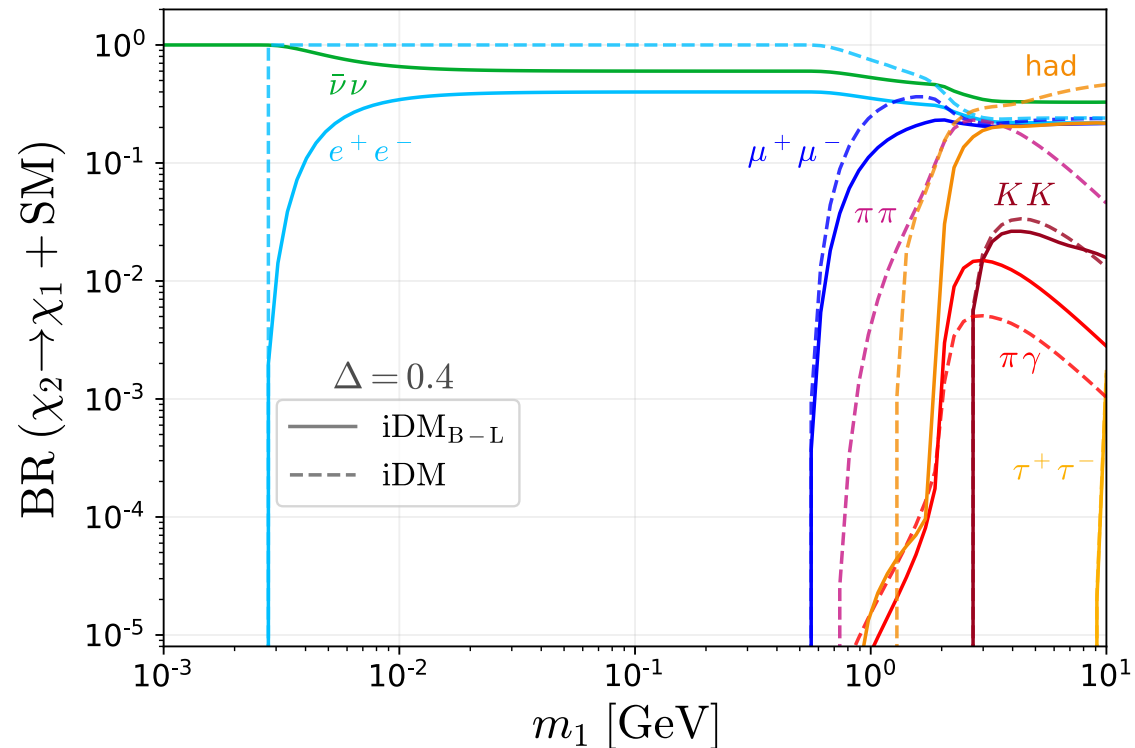
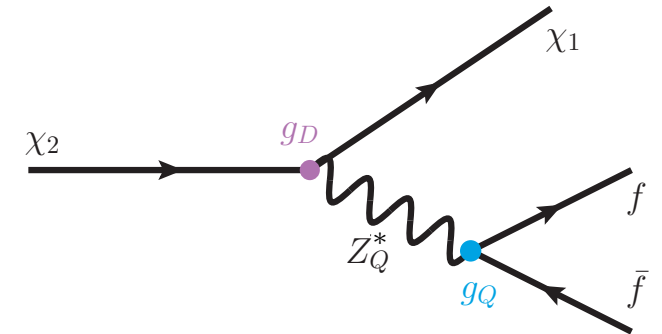


prompt-decay

Inelastic Dark Matter · Decay Rates

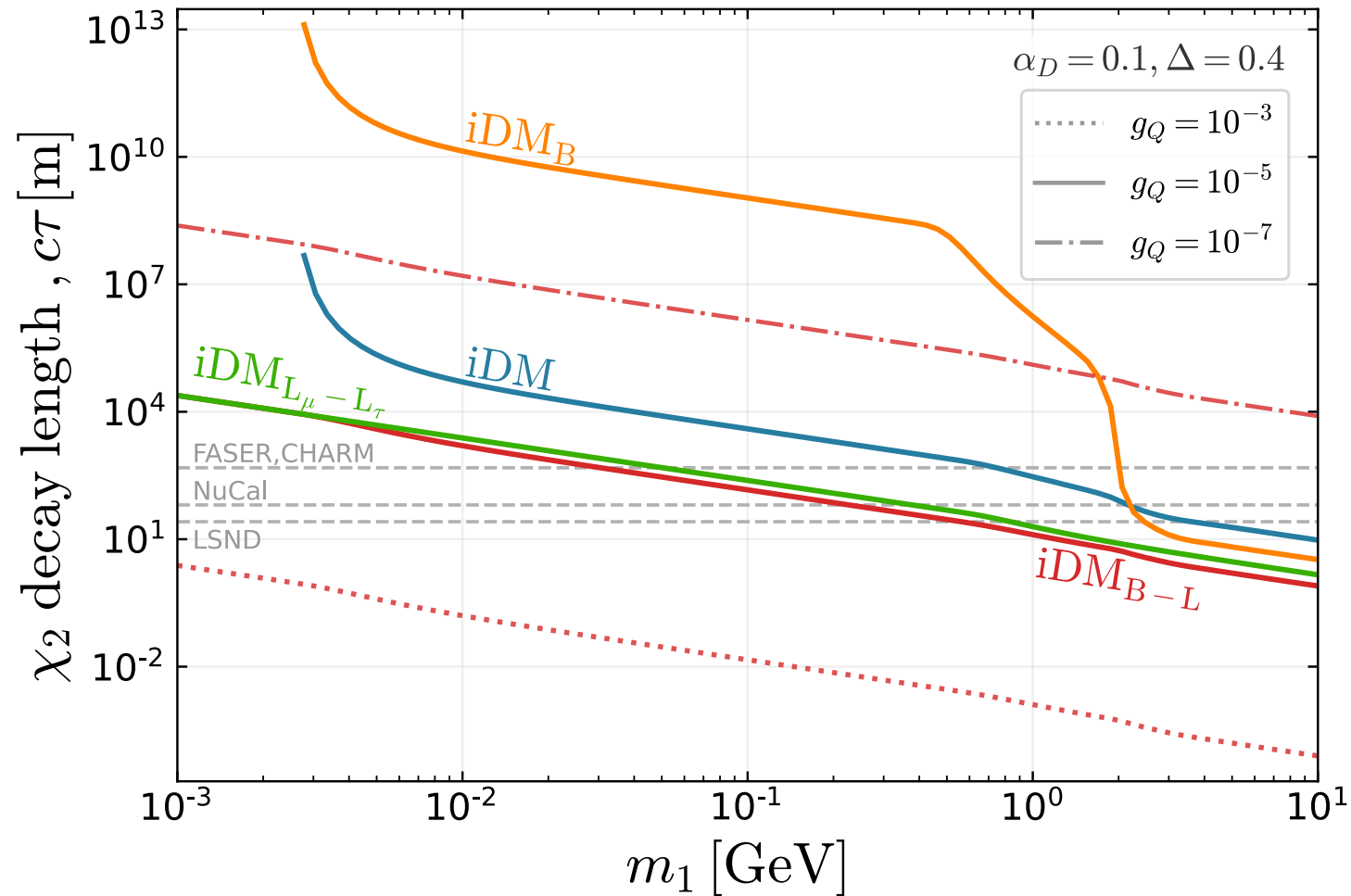
Decay rates · Dark fermion χ_2

$$\Gamma(\chi_2 \rightarrow \chi_1 \bar{f} f) \simeq \frac{4 \alpha_Q \alpha_D \Delta^5 m_{Z_Q}}{15 \pi R^5}$$



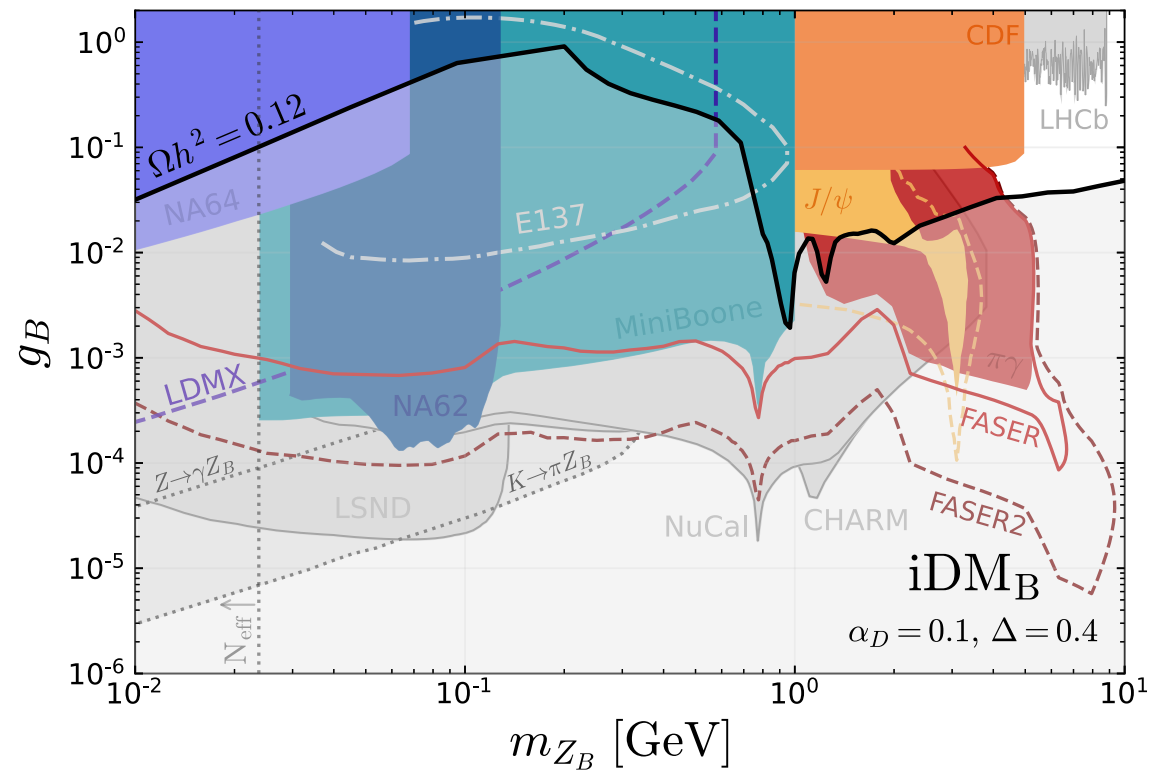
Inelastic Dark Matter · Decay Rates

Decay rates · Dark fermion χ_2



Inelastic Dark Matter · Bounds

→ iDM_B



⇒

