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Measurements of D^\pm meson production and total charm quark production yield at midrapidity in Au+Au collisions at $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200$ GeV by the STAR experiment

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One of main goals of the STAR experiment is to study the Quark-Gluon Plasma (QGP) produced in ultra-relativistic heavy-ion collisions. Charm quarks are an ideal probe of the QGP, as they are created primarily in hard partonic scatterings at early stage of Au+Au collisions. In this talk, we present the measurements of D^\pm meson production in Au+Au collisions at $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200$ GeV by STAR using the data collected in 2014 and 2016. D^\pm mesons are reconstructed via a topological reconstruction of the three body hadronic decay $D^\pm \rightarrow K^\mp \pi^\pm \pi^\pm$, enabled by the exceptional track pointing resolution of the Heavy-Flavor Tracker. Supervised machine-learning techniques are used to improve the signal significance. The D^\pm transverse momentum (p_T) spectra are then obtained in 0-10%, 10-40%, and 40-80% central Au+Au collisions. The spectra are used to calculate the nuclear modification factor as a function of p_T which reveals a significant suppression of high- p_T D^\pm meson production in central and mid-central Au+Au collisions with respect to p+p collisions. The D^+/D^0 yield ratios as a function of p_T and centrality have also been extracted and compared to that from PYTHIA calculations. For the first time, STAR has measured the total charm quark production cross section per nucleon-nucleon collision, combining the main open charm hadron ground states (D^0 , D^\pm , D_s , and Λ_c), at midrapidity in 10-40% central Au+Au collisions at 200 GeV, which provides insight into the charm quark production in heavy-ion collisions.

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