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Towards the slow extraction of mixed He-2+ and C-6+ beams for online range verification

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In recent years, mixed helium (He-2+) and carbon ion (C-6+) irradiation schemes have been proposed to facilitate in-vivo range verification in ion beam therapy. Such a scheme proposes to accelerate and extract both ion species simultaneously, with the idea of using C-6+ for tumor treatment, while performing real-time dosimetry with He-2+ in a detector downstream of the patient.

The MedAustron center for ion beam therapy and research, which supplies protons and carbon ions for clinical treatment, is currently being commissioned to additionally provide helium ions for nonclinical research. The availability of both He-2+ and C-6+ beams opens the opportunity for studying the feasibility of the described mixed beam irradiation scheme. A key aspect in this context is the slow extraction of the ion mix, which is affected by both the relative charge-to-mass ratio offset of approximately 6e-4 and potential differences in the transverse phase space distributions. This contribution discusses requirements for maintaining a specified ion ratio throughout the spill, presents first simulation results and summarizes preliminary assessments on the applicability of different extraction mechanisms.

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