

3. Conservation of momentum requires that the gamma ray particles move in opposite directions with momenta of the same magnitude. Since the magnitude p of the momentum of a gamma ray particle is related to its energy by $p = E/c$, the particles have the same energy E . Conservation of energy yields $m_\pi c^2 = 2E$, where m_π is the mass of a neutral pion. According to Table 45-4, the rest energy of a neutral pion is $m_\pi c^2 = 135.0 \text{ MeV}$. Hence, $E = (135.0 \text{ MeV})/2 = 67.5 \text{ MeV}$. We use the result of Exercise 3 of Chapter 39 to obtain the wavelength of the gamma rays:

$$\lambda = \frac{1240 \text{ eV} \cdot \text{nm}}{67.5 \times 10^6 \text{ eV}} = 1.84 \times 10^{-5} \text{ nm} = 18.4 \text{ fm} .$$