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Chiral symmetry of QCD and some of its implications

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In the limit of vanishing quark masses, QCD exhibits a chiral symmetry. This symmetry is not only broken explicitly by the finite physical quark masses, but is also assumed to be broken spontaneously. Chiral symmetry and its breaking form the basis of a series of effective field theories used to describe the low-energy interactions between hadrons and their coupling to external fields. Increasingly, these theories have found applications in nuclear physics, and chiral symmetry is also used to analyze beyond-the-standard-model physics.

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