

Search for a Low-Mass Higgs Boson in $\Upsilon(3S) \rightarrow \gamma A^0$, $A^0 \rightarrow \tau^+ \tau^-$ at *BABAR*

B. Aubert,¹ Y. Karyotakis,¹ J. P. Lees,¹ V. Poireau,¹ E. Prencipe,¹ X. Prudent,¹ V. Tisserand,¹ J. Garra Tico,² E. Grauges,² M. Martinelli,^{3a,3b} A. Palano,^{3a,3b} M. Pappagallo,^{3a,3b} G. Eigen,³ B. Stugu,³ L. Sun,³ M. Battaglia,⁴ D. N. Brown,⁴ L. T. Kerth,⁴ Yu. G. Kolomensky,⁴ G. Lynch,⁴ I. L. Osipenkov,⁴ K. Tackmann,⁴ T. Tanabe,⁴ C. M. Hawkes,⁵ N. Soni,⁵ A. T. Watson,⁵ H. Koch,⁶ T. Schroeder,⁶ D. J. Asgeirsson,⁷ B. G. Fulsom,⁷ C. Hearty,⁷ T. S. Mattison,⁷ J. A. McKenna,⁷ M. Barrett,⁸ A. Khan,⁸ A. Randle-Conde,⁸ V. E. Blinov,⁹ A. D. Bukin,^{9,*} A. R. Buzykaev,⁹ V. P. Druzhinin,⁹ V. B. Golubev,⁹ A. P. Onuchin,⁹ S. I. Serednyakov,⁹ Yu. I. Skovpen,⁹ E. P. Solodov,⁹ K. Yu. Todyshev,⁹ M. Bondioli,¹⁰ S. Curry,¹⁰ I. Eschrich,¹⁰ D. Kirkby,¹⁰ A. J. Lankford,¹⁰ P. Lund,¹⁰ M. Mandelkern,¹⁰ E. C. Martin,¹⁰ D. P. Stoker,¹⁰ H. Atmacan,¹¹ J. W. Gary,¹¹ F. Liu,¹¹ O. Long,¹¹ G. M. Vitug,¹¹ Z. Yasin,¹¹ V. Sharma,¹² C. Campagnari,¹³ T. M. Hong,¹³ D. Kovalskyi,¹³ M. A. Mazur,¹³ J. D. Richman,¹³ T. W. Beck,¹⁴ A. M. Eisner,¹⁴ C. A. Heusch,¹⁴ J. Kroseberg,¹⁴ W. S. Lockman,¹⁴ A. J. Martinez,¹⁴ T. Schalk,¹⁴ B. A. Schumm,¹⁴ A. Seiden,¹⁴ L. Wang,¹⁴ L. O. Winstrom,¹⁴ C. H. Cheng,¹⁵ D. A. Doll,¹⁵ B. Echenard,¹⁵ F. Fang,¹⁵ D. G. Hitlin,¹⁵ I. Narsky,¹⁵ P. Ongmongkolkul,¹⁵ T. Piatenko,¹⁵ F. C. Porter,¹⁵ R. Andreassen,¹⁶ G. Mancinelli,¹⁶ B. T. Meadows,¹⁶ K. Mishra,¹⁶ M. D. Sokoloff,¹⁶ P. C. Bloom,¹⁷ W. T. Ford,¹⁷ A. Gaz,¹⁷ J. F. Hirschauer,¹⁷ M. Nagel,¹⁷ U. Nauenberg,¹⁷ J. G. Smith,¹⁷ S. R. Wagner,¹⁷ R. Ayad,^{18,†} W. H. Toki,¹⁸ R. J. Wilson,¹⁸ E. Feltresi,¹⁹ A. Hauke,¹⁹ H. Jasper,¹⁹ T. M. Karbach,¹⁹ J. Merkel,¹⁹ A. Petzold,¹⁹ B. Spaan,¹⁹ K. Wacker,¹⁹ M. J. Kobel,²⁰ R. Nogowski,²⁰ K. R. Schubert,²⁰ R. Schwierz,²⁰ D. Bernard,²¹ E. Latour,²¹ M. Verderi,²¹ P. J. Clark,²² S. Playfer,²² J. E. Watson,²² M. Andreotti,^{24a,24b} D. Bettoni,^{24a} C. Bozzi,^{24a} R. Calabrese,^{24a,24b} A. Cecchi,^{24a,24b} G. Cibinetto,^{24a,24b} E. Fioravanti,^{24a,24b} P. Franchini,^{24a,24b} E. Luppi,^{24a,24b} M. Munerato,^{24a,24b} M. Negrini,^{24a,24b} A. Petrella,^{24a,24b} L. Piemontese,^{24a} V. Santoro,^{24a,24b} R. Baldini-Ferrolli,²³ A. Calcaterra,²³ R. de Sangro,²³ G. Finocchiaro,²³ S. Pacetti,²³ P. Patteri,²³ I. M. Peruzzi,^{23,‡} M. Piccolo,²³ M. Rama,²³ A. Zallo,²³ R. Contri,^{26a,26b} E. Guido,^{26a,26b} M. Lo Vetere,^{26a,26b} M. R. Monge,^{26a,26b} S. Passaggio,^{26a} C. Patrignani,^{26a,26b} E. Robutti,^{26a} S. Tosi,^{26a,26b} K. S. Chaisanguanthum,²⁴ M. Morii,²⁴ A. Adametz,²⁵ J. Marks,²⁵ S. Schenk,²⁵ U. Uwer,²⁵ F. U. Bernlochner,²⁶ V. Klose,²⁶ H. M. Lacker,²⁶ T. Lueck,²⁶ A. Volk,²⁶ D. J. Bard,²⁷ P. D. Dauncey,²⁷ M. Tibbetts,²⁷ P. K. Behera,²⁸ M. J. Charles,²⁸ U. Mallik,²⁸ J. Cochran,²⁹ H. B. Crawley,²⁹ L. Dong,²⁹ V. Eyges,²⁹ W. T. Meyer,²⁹ S. Prell,²⁹ E. I. Rosenberg,²⁹ A. E. Rubin,²⁹ Y. Y. Gao,³⁰ A. V. Gritsan,³⁰ Z. J. Guo,³⁰ N. Arnaud,³¹ J. Béguilleux,³¹ A. D'Orazio,³¹ M. Davier,³¹ D. Derkach,³¹ J. Firmino da Costa,³¹ G. Grosdidier,³¹ F. Le Diberder,³¹ V. Lepeltier,³¹ A. M. Lutz,³¹ B. Malaescu,³¹ S. Pruvot,³¹ P. Roudeau,³¹ M. H. Schune,³¹ J. Serrano,³¹ V. Sordini,^{31,§} A. Stocchi,³¹ G. Wormser,³¹ D. J. Lange,³² D. M. Wright,³² I. Bingham,³³ J. P. Burke,³³ C. A. Chavez,³³ J. R. Fry,³³ E. Gabathuler,³³ R. Gamet,³³ D. E. Hutchcroft,³³ D. J. Payne,³³ C. Touramanis,³³ A. J. Bevan,³⁴ C. K. Clarke,³⁴ F. Di Lodovico,³⁴ R. Sacco,³⁴ M. Sigamani,³⁴ G. Cowan,³⁵ S. Paramesvaran,³⁵ A. C. Wren,³⁵ D. N. Brown,³⁶ C. L. Davis,³⁶ A. G. Denig,³⁷ M. Fritsch,³⁷ W. Gradl,³⁷ A. Hafner,³⁷ K. E. Alwyn,³⁸ D. Bailey,³⁸ R. J. Barlow,³⁸ G. Jackson,³⁸ G. D. Lafferty,³⁸ T. J. West,³⁸ J. I. Yi,³⁸ J. Anderson,³⁹ C. Chen,³⁹ A. Jawahery,³⁹ D. A. Roberts,³⁹ G. Simi,³⁹ J. M. Tuggle,³⁹ C. Dallapiccola,⁴⁰ E. Salvati,⁴⁰ R. Cowan,⁴¹ D. Dujmic,⁴¹ P. H. Fisher,⁴¹ S. W. Henderson,⁴¹ G. Sciolla,⁴¹ M. Spitznagel,⁴¹ R. K. Yamamoto,⁴¹ M. Zhao,⁴¹ P. M. Patel,⁴² S. H. Robertson,⁴² M. Schram,⁴² P. Biassoni,^{46a,46b} A. Lazzaro,^{46a,46b} V. Lombardo,^{46a} F. Palombo,^{46a,46b} S. Stracka,^{46a,46b} L. Cremaldi,⁴³ R. Godang,^{43,||} R. Kroeger,⁴³ P. Sonnek,⁴³ D. J. Summers,⁴³ H. W. Zhao,⁴³ M. Simard,⁴⁴ P. Taras,⁴⁴ H. Nicholson,⁴⁵ G. De Nardo,^{50a,50b} L. Lista,^{50a} D. Monorchio,^{50a,50b} G. Onorato,^{50a,50b} C. Sciacca,^{50a,50b} G. Raven,⁴⁶ H. L. Snoek,⁴⁶ C. P. Jessop,⁴⁷ K. J. Knoepfel,⁴⁷ J. M. LoSecco,⁴⁷ W. F. Wang,⁴⁷ L. A. Corwin,⁴⁸ K. Honscheid,⁴⁸ H. Kagan,⁴⁸ R. Kass,⁴⁸ J. P. Morris,⁴⁸ A. M. Rahimi,⁴⁸ S. J. Sekula,⁴⁸ Q. K. Wong,⁴⁸ N. L. Blount,⁴⁹ J. Brau,⁴⁹ R. Frey,⁴⁹ O. Igonkina,⁴⁹ J. A. Kolb,⁴⁹ M. Lu,⁴⁹ R. Rahmat,⁴⁹ N. B. Sinev,⁴⁹ D. Strom,⁴⁹ J. Strube,⁴⁹ E. Torrence,⁴⁹ G. Castelli,^{55a,55b} N. Gagliardi,^{55a,55b} M. Margoni,^{55a,55b} M. Morandin,^{55a} M. Posocco,^{55a} M. Rotondo,^{55a} F. Simonetto,^{55a,55b} R. Stroili,^{55a,55b} C. Voci,^{55a,55b} P. del Amo Sanchez,⁵⁰ E. Ben-Haim,⁵⁰ G. R. Bonneaud,⁵⁰ H. Briand,⁵⁰ J. Chauveau,⁵⁰ O. Hamon,⁵⁰ Ph. Leruste,⁵⁰ G. Marchiori,⁵⁰ J. Ocariz,⁵⁰ A. Perez,⁵⁰ J. Prendki,⁵⁰ S. Sitt,⁵⁰ L. Gladney,⁵¹ M. Biasini,^{58a,58b} E. Manoni,^{58a,58b} C. Angelini,^{59a,59b} G. Batignani,^{59a,59b} S. Bettarini,^{59a,59b} G. Calderini,^{59a,59b,¶} M. Carpinelli,^{59a,59b,**} A. Cervelli,^{59a,59b} F. Forti,^{59a,59b} M. A. Giorgi,^{59a,59b} A. Lusiani,^{59a,59c} M. Morganti,^{59a,59b} N. Neri,^{59a,59b} E. Paoloni,^{59a,59b} G. Rizzo,^{59a,59b} J. J. Walsh,^{59a} D. Lopes Pegna,⁵² C. Lu,⁵² J. Olsen,⁵² A. J. S. Smith,⁵² A. V. Telnov,⁵² F. Anulli,^{61a} E. Baracchini,^{61a,61b} G. Cavoto,^{61a} R. Faccini,^{61a,61b} F. Ferrarotto,^{61a} F. Ferroni,^{61a,61b} M. Gaspero,^{61a,61b} P. D. Jackson,^{61a} L. Li Gioi,^{61a} M. A. Mazzoni,^{61a} S. Morganti,^{61a} G. Piredda,^{61a} F. Renga,^{61a,61b} C. Voena,^{61a} M. Ebert,⁵³ T. Hartmann,⁵³ H. Schröder,⁵³ R. Waldi,⁵³ T. Adye,⁵⁴ B. Franek,⁵⁴ E. O. Olaiya,⁵⁴ F. F. Wilson,⁵⁴ S. Emery,⁵⁵ L. Esteve,⁵⁵ G. Hamel de Monchenault,⁵⁵ W. Kozanecki,⁵⁵ G. Vasseur,⁵⁵ Ch. Yèche,⁵⁵ M. Zito,⁵⁵ M. T. Allen,⁵⁶ D. Aston,⁵⁶

R. Bartoldus,⁵⁶ J. F. Benitez,⁵⁶ R. Cenci,⁵⁶ J. P. Coleman,⁵⁶ M. R. Convery,⁵⁶ J. C. Dingfelder,⁵⁶ J. Dorfan,⁵⁶ G. P. Dubois-Felsmann,⁵⁶ W. Dunwoodie,⁵⁶ R. C. Field,⁵⁶ M. Franco Sevilla,⁵⁶ A. M. Gabareen,⁵⁶ M. T. Graham,⁵⁶ P. Grenier,⁵⁶ C. Hast,⁵⁶ W. R. Innes,⁵⁶ J. Kaminski,⁵⁶ M. H. Kelsey,⁵⁶ H. Kim,⁵⁶ P. Kim,⁵⁶ M. L. Kocian,⁵⁶ D. W. G. S. Leith,⁵⁶ S. Li,⁵⁶ B. Lindquist,⁵⁶ S. Luitz,⁵⁶ V. Luth,⁵⁶ H. L. Lynch,⁵⁶ D. B. MacFarlane,⁵⁶ H. Marsiske,⁵⁶ R. Messner,^{56,*} D. R. Muller,⁵⁶ H. Neal,⁵⁶ S. Nelson,⁵⁶ C. P. O'Grady,⁵⁶ I. Ofte,⁵⁶ M. Perl,⁵⁶ B. N. Ratcliff,⁵⁶ A. Roodman,⁵⁶ A. A. Salnikov,⁵⁶ R. H. Schindler,⁵⁶ J. Schwiening,⁵⁶ A. Snyder,⁵⁶ D. Su,⁵⁶ M. K. Sullivan,⁵⁶ K. Suzuki,⁵⁶ S. K. Swain,⁵⁶ J. M. Thompson,⁵⁶ J. Va'vra,⁵⁶ A. P. Wagner,⁵⁶ M. Weaver,⁵⁶ C. A. West,⁵⁶ W. J. Wisniewski,⁵⁶ M. Wittgen,⁵⁶ D. H. Wright,⁵⁶ H. W. Wulsin,⁵⁶ A. K. Yarritu,⁵⁶ C. C. Young,⁵⁶ V. Ziegler,⁵⁶ X. R. Chen,⁵⁷ H. Liu,⁵⁷ W. Park,⁵⁷ M. V. Purohit,⁵⁷ R. M. White,⁵⁷ J. R. Wilson,⁵⁷ M. Bellis,⁵⁸ P. R. Burchat,⁵⁸ A. J. Edwards,⁵⁸ T. S. Miyashita,⁵⁸ S. Ahmed,⁵⁹ M. S. Alam,⁵⁹ J. A. Ernst,⁵⁹ B. Pan,⁵⁹ M. A. Saeed,⁵⁹ S. B. Zain,⁵⁹ A. Soffer,⁶⁰ S. M. Spanier,⁶¹ B. J. Wogslund,⁶¹ R. Eckmann,⁶² J. L. Ritchie,⁶² A. M. Ruland,⁶² C. J. Schilling,⁶² R. F. Schwitters,⁶² B. C. Wray,⁶² B. W. Drummond,⁶³ J. M. Izen,⁶³ X. C. Lou,⁶³ F. Bianchi,^{73a,73b} D. Gamba,^{73a,73b} M. Pelliccioni,^{73a,73b} M. Bomben,^{74a,74b} L. Bosisio,^{74a,74b} C. Cartaro,^{74a,74b} G. Della Ricca,^{74a,74b} L. Lanceri,^{74a,74b} L. Vitale,^{74a,74b} V. Azzolini,⁶⁴ N. Lopez-March,⁶⁴ F. Martinez-Vidal,⁶⁴ D. A. Milanese,⁶⁴ A. Oyanguren,⁶⁴ J. Albert,⁶⁵ Sw. Banerjee,⁶⁵ B. Bhuyan,⁶⁵ H. H. F. Choi,⁶⁵ K. Hamano,⁶⁵ G. J. King,⁶⁵ R. Kowalewski,⁶⁵ M. J. Lewczuk,⁶⁵ I. M. Nugent,⁶⁵ J. M. Roney,⁶⁵ R. J. Sobie,⁶⁵ T. J. Gershon,⁶⁶ P. F. Harrison,⁶⁶ J. Ilic,⁶⁶ T. E. Latham,⁶⁶ G. B. Mohanty,⁶⁶ E. M. T. Puccio,⁶⁶ H. R. Band,⁶⁷ X. Chen,⁶⁷ S. Dasu,⁶⁷ K. T. Flood,⁶⁷ Y. Pan,⁶⁷ R. Prepost,⁶⁷ C. O. Vuosalo,⁶⁷ and S. L. Wu⁶⁷

(The *BABAR* Collaboration)

¹Laboratoire d'Annecy-le-Vieux de Physique des Particules (LAPP), Université de Savoie, CNRS/IN2P3, F-74941 Annecy-Le-Vieux, France

²Facultat de Física, Departament ECM, Universitat de Barcelona, E-08028 Barcelona, Spain

^{3a}INFN Sezione di Bari, I-70126 Bari, Italy;

^{3b}Dipartimento di Fisica, Università di Bari, I-70126 Bari, Italy

³University of Bergen, Institute of Physics, N-5007 Bergen, Norway

⁴Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and University of California, Berkeley, California 94720, USA

⁵University of Birmingham, Birmingham, B15 2TT, United Kingdom

⁶Ruhr Universität Bochum, Institut für Experimentalphysik 1, D-44780 Bochum, Germany

⁷University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia, V6T 1Z1, Canada

⁸Brunel University, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 3PH, United Kingdom

⁹Budker Institute of Nuclear Physics, Novosibirsk 630090, Russia

¹⁰University of California at Irvine, Irvine, California 92697, USA

¹¹University of California at Riverside, Riverside, California 92521, USA

¹²University of California at San Diego, La Jolla, California 92093, USA

¹³University of California at Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, California 93106, USA

¹⁴University of California at Santa Cruz, Institute for Particle Physics, Santa Cruz, California 95064, USA

¹⁵California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, California 91125, USA

¹⁶University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio 45221, USA

¹⁷University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado 80309, USA

¹⁸Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado 80523, USA

¹⁹Technische Universität Dortmund, Fakultät Physik, D-44221 Dortmund, Germany

²⁰Technische Universität Dresden, Institut für Kern- und Teilchenphysik, D-01062 Dresden, Germany

²¹Laboratoire Leprince-Ringuet, CNRS/IN2P3, Ecole Polytechnique, F-91128 Palaiseau, France

²²University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh EH9 3JZ, United Kingdom

^{24a}INFN Sezione di Ferrara, I-44100 Ferrara, Italy;

^{24b}Dipartimento di Fisica, Università di Ferrara, I-44100 Ferrara, Italy

²³INFN Laboratori Nazionali di Frascati, I-00044 Frascati, Italy

^{26a}INFN Sezione di Genova, I-16146 Genova, Italy;

^{26b}Dipartimento di Fisica, Università di Genova, I-16146 Genova, Italy

²⁴Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138, USA

²⁵Universität Heidelberg, Physikalisches Institut, Philosophenweg 12, D-69120 Heidelberg, Germany

²⁶Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Institut für Physik, Newtonstr. 15, D-12489 Berlin, Germany

²⁷Imperial College London, London, SW7 2AZ, United Kingdom

²⁸University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa 52242, USA

²⁹Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011-3160, USA

³⁰Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland 21218, USA

- ³¹Laboratoire de l'Accélérateur Linéaire, IN2P3/CNRS et Université Paris-Sud 11, Centre Scientifique d'Orsay, B. P. 34, F-91898 Orsay Cedex, France
- ³²Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Livermore, California 94550, USA
- ³³University of Liverpool, Liverpool L69 7ZE, United Kingdom
- ³⁴Queen Mary, University of London, London, E1 4NS, United Kingdom
- ³⁵University of London, Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, Egham, Surrey TW20 0EX, United Kingdom
- ³⁶University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky 40292, USA
- ³⁷Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, Institut für Kernphysik, D-55099 Mainz, Germany
- ³⁸University of Manchester, Manchester M13 9PL, United Kingdom
- ³⁹University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland 20742, USA
- ⁴⁰University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts 01003, USA
- ⁴¹Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Laboratory for Nuclear Science, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139, USA
- ⁴²McGill University, Montréal, Québec, Canada H3A 2T8
- ^{46a}INFN Sezione di Milano, I-20133 Milano, Italy;
- ^{46b}Dipartimento di Fisica, Università di Milano, I-20133 Milano, Italy
- ⁴³University of Mississippi, University, Mississippi 38677, USA
- ⁴⁴Université de Montréal, Physique des Particules, Montréal, Québec, Canada H3C 3J7
- ⁴⁵Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Massachusetts 01075, USA
- ^{50a}INFN Sezione di Napoli, I-80126 Napoli, Italy;
- ^{50b}Dipartimento di Scienze Fisiche, Università di Napoli Federico II, I-80126 Napoli, Italy
- ⁴⁶NIKHEF, National Institute for Nuclear Physics and High Energy Physics, NL-1009 DB Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- ⁴⁷University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana 46556, USA
- ⁴⁸Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio 43210, USA
- ⁴⁹University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon 97403, USA
- ^{55a}INFN Sezione di Padova, I-35131 Padova, Italy;
- ^{55b}Dipartimento di Fisica, Università di Padova, I-35131 Padova, Italy
- ⁵⁰Laboratoire de Physique Nucléaire et de Hautes Energies, IN2P3/CNRS, Université Pierre et Marie Curie-Paris6, Université Denis Diderot-Paris7, F-75252 Paris, France
- ⁵¹University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104, USA
- ^{58a}INFN Sezione di Perugia, I-06100 Perugia, Italy;
- ^{58b}Dipartimento di Fisica, Università di Perugia, I-06100 Perugia, Italy
- ^{59a}INFN Sezione di Pisa, I-56127 Pisa, Italy;
- ^{59b}Dipartimento di Fisica, Università di Pisa, I-56127 Pisa, Italy;
- ^{59c}Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, I-56127 Pisa, Italy
- ⁵²Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey 08544, USA
- ^{61a}INFN Sezione di Roma, I-00185 Roma, Italy;
- ^{61b}Dipartimento di Fisica, Università di Roma La Sapienza, I-00185 Roma, Italy
- ⁵³Universität Rostock, D-18051 Rostock, Germany
- ⁵⁴Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, Chilton, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 0QX, United Kingdom
- ⁵⁵CEA, Irfu, SPP, Centre de Saclay, F-91191 Gif-sur-Yvette, France
- ⁵⁶SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory, Stanford, California 94309 USA
- ⁵⁷University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina 29208, USA
- ⁵⁸Stanford University, Stanford, California 94305-4060, USA
- ⁵⁹State University of New York, Albany, New York 12222, USA
- ⁶⁰Tel Aviv University, School of Physics and Astronomy, Tel Aviv, 69978, Israel
- ⁶¹University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee 37996, USA
- ⁶²University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas 78712, USA
- ⁶³University of Texas at Dallas, Richardson, Texas 75083, USA
- ^{73a}INFN Sezione di Torino, I-10125 Torino, Italy;
- ^{73b}Dipartimento di Fisica Sperimentale, Università di Torino, I-10125 Torino, Italy
- ^{74a}INFN Sezione di Trieste, I-34127 Trieste, Italy;
- ^{74b}Dipartimento di Fisica, Università di Trieste, I-34127 Trieste, Italy
- ⁶⁴IFIC, Universitat de Valencia-CSIC, E-46071 Valencia, Spain
- ⁶⁵University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia, V8W 3P6, Canada
- ⁶⁶Department of Physics, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL, United Kingdom
- ⁶⁷University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin 53706, USA

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We search for a light Higgs boson A^0 in the radiative decay $Y(3S) \rightarrow \gamma A^0$, $A^0 \rightarrow \tau^+ \tau^-$, $\tau^+ \rightarrow e^+ \nu_e \bar{\nu}_\tau$, or $\tau^+ \rightarrow \mu^+ \nu_\mu \bar{\nu}_\tau$. The data sample contains 122×10^6 $Y(3S)$ events recorded with the BABAR detector. We find no evidence for a narrow structure in the studied $\tau^+ \tau^-$ invariant mass region of

$4.03 < m_{\tau^+\tau^-} < 10.10 \text{ GeV}/c^2$. We exclude at the 90% confidence level (C.L.) a low-mass Higgs boson decaying to $\tau^+\tau^-$ with a product branching fraction $\mathcal{B}(Y(3S) \rightarrow \gamma A^0) \times \mathcal{B}(A^0 \rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-) > (1.5\text{--}16) \times 10^{-5}$ across the $m_{\tau^+\tau^-}$ range. We also set a 90% C.L. upper limit on the $\tau^+\tau^-$ decay of the η_b at $\mathcal{B}(\eta_b \rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-) < 8\%$.

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In the standard model (SM) of particle physics [1], fundamental particles acquire mass via the Higgs mechanism [2]. This mechanism requires the existence of at least one new particle called the Higgs boson. In the SM, there is only a single Higgs boson, with a mass of the order of the electroweak unification scale ($\sim 100 \text{ GeV}/c^2$). In the minimal supersymmetric standard model (MSSM), additional Higgs doublets are required to give mass to the new particles [3]. Moreover, in the next-to-minimal supersymmetric standard model (NMSSM), an additional Higgs singlet field is introduced to solve the hierarchy problem [4]. A linear combination of this singlet with a Higgs doublet leads to a CP -odd Higgs state, A^0 , whose mass need not be larger than $2m_b$, where m_b is the b -quark mass [4,5]. It is ideal to search for this state in $Y \rightarrow \gamma A^0$ decays [6]. The branching fraction $\mathcal{B}(Y(3S) \rightarrow \gamma A^0)$ depends on the NMSSM parameters, but a value as large as 10^{-4} is plausible for reasonable parameters [4]. In the mass range where the decay $A^0 \rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-$ is kinematically accessible, this mode is expected to dominate. Constraints on the invisible [7] and dimuon [8] decays of the A^0 have recently been obtained.

The current best limit on the product of branching fractions $\mathcal{B}(Y(1S) \rightarrow \gamma A^0) \times \mathcal{B}(A^0 \rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-)$ is given by the CLEO Collaboration [9] based on a data sample of 21.5×10^6 $Y(1S)$ candidates. The CLEO 90% C.L. limits cover the range $2m_\tau < m_{A^0} < 9.5 \text{ GeV}/c^2$ (m_τ is the τ -lepton mass [10]) and vary between 1×10^{-5} and 48×10^{-5} . A recent D0 search for a neutral pseudoscalar Higgs boson in a similar mass range showed no significant signal [11].

In this Letter, we study the decays $Y(3S) \rightarrow \gamma \tau^+\tau^-$, where the search for A^0 is extended for a wider mass range with respect to the $Y(1S) \rightarrow \gamma \tau^+\tau^-$. We scan for peaks in the distribution of the photon energy, E_γ , corresponding to peaks in the $\tau\tau$ invariant mass $m_{\tau^+\tau^-}^2 = m_{3S}^2 - 2m_{3S}E_\gamma$, where m_{3S} is the $Y(3S)$ mass and E_γ is measured in the $Y(3S)$ rest frame [center-of-mass (c.m.) frame]. We quote branching fraction values in the region $4.03 < m_{\tau^+\tau^-} < 10.10 \text{ GeV}/c^2$, but we exclude from our search the region $9.52 < m_{\tau^+\tau^-} < 9.61 \text{ GeV}/c^2$, because of the irreducible background of photons produced in the decay chain $Y(3S) \rightarrow \gamma \chi_{bJ}(2P)$, $\chi_{bJ}(2P) \rightarrow \gamma Y(1S)$, where $J = 0, 1, 2$. In addition, we set an upper limit on $\mathcal{B}(\eta_b \rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-)$.

The data were collected with the BABAR detector [12] at the PEP-II asymmetric-energy e^+e^- storage rings at the SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory, operating at the

$Y(3S)$ resonance. We use a data sample of 122×10^6 $Y(3S)$ events, corresponding to an integrated luminosity of 28 fb^{-1} . We also use data samples of 2.6 fb^{-1} recorded 30 MeV below the $Y(3S)$ (OFF3S), 79 fb^{-1} at the $Y(4S)$ (ON4S), and 8 fb^{-1} 40 MeV below the $Y(4S)$ resonance (OFF4S) to study the background and to optimize the selection criteria. These data samples were taken with the same detector configurations. Monte Carlo (MC) event samples based on GEANT4 [13] simulation of the detector are used to optimize selection criteria and evaluate efficiencies.

We select events in which both τ -leptons decay leptonically, $\tau^+ \rightarrow e^+ \nu_e \bar{\nu}_\tau$ or $\tau^+ \rightarrow \mu^+ \nu_\mu \bar{\nu}_\tau$ (denoted in the following as $\tau \rightarrow e$, or $\tau \rightarrow \mu$) [14]. Events are required to contain at least one photon with $E_\gamma > 100 \text{ MeV}$, and exactly two charged tracks. We allow up to nine additional photons with energies below 100 MeV in the CM frame. Photons are reconstructed from localized deposits of energy in the electromagnetic calorimeter, which have energies larger than 50 MeV in the laboratory frame and which are not associated with a charged track. Both charged tracks are required to be identified as leptons (e or μ). After this selection, the residual background is mostly due to $e^+e^- \rightarrow \gamma \tau^+\tau^-$ and higher order QED processes, including two-photon reactions such as $e^+e^- \rightarrow e^+e^-e^+e^-$ and $e^+e^- \rightarrow e^+e^-\mu^+\mu^-$ with smaller contributions from other $Y(3S)$ decays and $e^+e^- \rightarrow q\bar{q}$ ($q = u, d, s, c$).

To reduce this residual background, we exploit a set of eight discriminating variables: the total CM energy (E_{total}) calculated from the two leptons and the most energetic photon; the squared missing mass (m_{miss}^2) obtained from the missing four-momentum, which is the difference between the final and initial state momenta; the aplanarity (\mathcal{A}_{pl}), which is the cosine of the angle between the photon and the plane of the leptons; the largest cosine between the photon and one of the tracks ($\cos\theta_{\gamma\text{-track}}$); the cosine of the polar angle of the highest-momentum track ($\cos\theta_{\text{track}}$); the transverse momentum of the event (p_T) calculated in the CM frame; the cosine of the polar angle of the missing momentum vector ($\cos\theta_{\text{miss}}$); and the cosine of the opening angle between the tracks in the photon recoil frame ($\cos\theta_{\text{open}}$). The final selection criteria on these variables are obtained by maximizing the quantity S/\sqrt{B} , where S (B) stands for the expected number of signal (background) events. Numbers of signal events are obtained from MC samples, while background yields are obtained from the OFF3S, ON4S, and OFF4S datasets. Since the background

varies as a function of the photon energy, we optimize the selection criteria in five E_γ regions: (S_1) $0.2 < E_\gamma < 0.5$ GeV, (S_2) $0.5 < E_\gamma < 2.0$ GeV, (S_3) $1.5 < E_\gamma < 2.5$ GeV, (S_4) $2.5 < E_\gamma < 3.5$ GeV, and (S_5) $3.0 < E_\gamma < 5.0$ GeV. The overlaps between the E_γ regions reduce the discontinuity in the efficiency at the boundaries. The dominant irreducible background is due to $e^+e^- \rightarrow \gamma\tau^+\tau^-$. The highest level of background contaminations is observed at low E_γ values. Among the different final states, the background is largest in $\tau\tau \rightarrow ee$ and smallest in $\tau\tau \rightarrow e\mu$.

The photon energy resolution degrades as a function of E_γ , from 8 MeV at $E_\gamma \sim 0.2$ GeV to 55 MeV at $E_\gamma \sim 4.5$ GeV. The selection efficiency is calculated using MC events. The efficiency in the $\tau\tau \rightarrow ee$, $\tau\tau \rightarrow e\mu$, and $\tau\tau \rightarrow \mu\mu$ modes varies as a function of E_γ between 10–14%, 22–26%, and 12–20%, respectively. The MC samples are generated with angular decay distributions expected for a CP -odd Higgs boson; similar efficiencies are obtained for CP -even states.

We search for an excess in a narrow region in the E_γ spectrum since any peak in the recoil mass ($m_{\tau\tau}$), indicating the presence of a new particle decaying in τ pairs, translates to a peak in the E_γ distribution. We describe the E_γ distribution as a smooth background spectrum and a narrow enhancement of known width, but unknown position and event yield. We perform a binned maximum likelihood fit simultaneously to the $\tau\tau \rightarrow ee$, $e\mu$, and $\mu\mu$ samples.

The fit is performed in two steps. First, we assume there is no signal and fit the background function. Theoretical motivations [15] inspired the choice of the background function shape, $f = [p(1-x)^r/E_\gamma^q + s/E_\gamma^5]\beta(x) \times (3 - \beta^2(x))$, where $\beta(x) \equiv \sqrt{1 - 4m_\tau^2/[m_{3S}^2(1-x)]}$, $x \equiv 2E_\gamma/m_{3S}$. For each $\tau\tau$ -decay mode, a different set of the parameters p, q, r, s is used. These parameters are allowed to vary.

The events $Y(3S) \rightarrow \gamma\chi_{bJ}(2P)$, $\chi_{bJ}(2P) \rightarrow \gamma Y(nS)$, and $Y(nS) \rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-$ ($J = 0, 1, 2$; $n = 1, 2$) are expected to peak in E_γ when the photon from $\chi_{bJ}(2P) \rightarrow \gamma Y(nS)$ is misidentified as the radiative photon from the $Y(3S)$ decay. Each of the peaks in the photon spectrum due to the $\chi_{bJ}(2P) \rightarrow \gamma Y(1S)$ transitions is described by a crystal ball [16] (CB) function. The mean values for the $\chi_{b0}(2P)$ and $\chi_{b1}(2P)$ CB functions are fixed to the PDG [10], and the width values are fixed to the MC resolution, while the mean and width for $\chi_{b2}(2P)$ are free. The power law and the transition point for all CB functions used in the analysis are fixed to the values obtained from MC simulations. The event yields for the $\chi_{bJ}(2P)$ background for each of the three $\tau\tau$ data samples are related via their relative efficiencies, which are functions of E_γ . To account for the contributions from $\chi_{bJ}(2P) \rightarrow \gamma Y(2S)$, a fourth CB function is added, for which the mean, width, and the relative

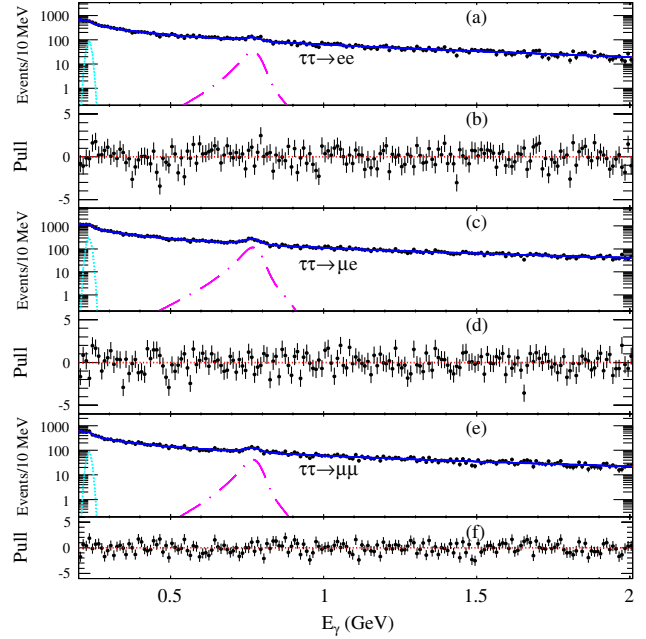


FIG. 1 (color online). (a), (c), (e): E_γ distributions for the different $\tau\tau$ -decay modes. Filled circles show the data; dotted lines represent contributions from $Y(3S) \rightarrow \gamma\chi_{bJ}(2P)$, $\chi_{bJ}(2P) \rightarrow \gamma Y(2S)$; dotted-dashed lines show contributions from $Y(3S) \rightarrow \gamma\chi_{bJ}(2P)$, $\chi_{bJ}(2P) \rightarrow \gamma Y(1S)$; and solid lines show the total background function. For each $\tau\tau$ -decay mode, the difference between the background function and the data divided by the uncertainty in the data is shown [(b), (d), (f)].

normalization are free. The fitted mean and width obtained for this peak are 234 ± 2 MeV and 13.3 ± 2.7 MeV (statistical uncertainties only), respectively. The number of events from the $\chi_{bJ}(2P) \rightarrow \gamma Y(nS)$ ($n = 1, 2$) contamination are common between the different $\tau\tau$ -decay modes, and divided between these modes according to the efficiency sum, $\epsilon^N = \epsilon_{ee} + 2\epsilon_{e\mu} + \epsilon_{\mu\mu}$, where ϵ_{ee} , $\epsilon_{e\mu}$, and $\epsilon_{\mu\mu}$ are the efficiencies as a function of E_γ in the decay modes $\tau\tau \rightarrow ee$, $e\mu$, and $\mu\mu$, respectively. An example of the fits to the E_γ distributions in the different $\tau^+\tau^-$ -decay modes, obtained with the selection criteria S_1 and fitted in the region $0.2 < E_\gamma < 2.0$ GeV, are shown in Fig. 1. Satisfactory fits are obtained.

In the second step of the fit procedure, we search for the signal $Y(3S) \rightarrow \gamma A^0$, $A^0 \rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-$. We assume the A^0 has negligible width [17] and parameterize the signal distribution with a CB function. The search for such a signal is performed by scanning for peaks in the E_γ distributions in steps that are equal to half the photon-energy resolution at any chosen value of E_γ . In total, 307 scan points are examined. The mean of the signal function is fixed to the photon energy at the i^{th} scan point (E_γ^i). The signal width is fixed to the value of the photon-energy resolution obtained from the MC simulation. The contribution from each $\tau\tau$ -decay mode to the total number of Higgs candidates

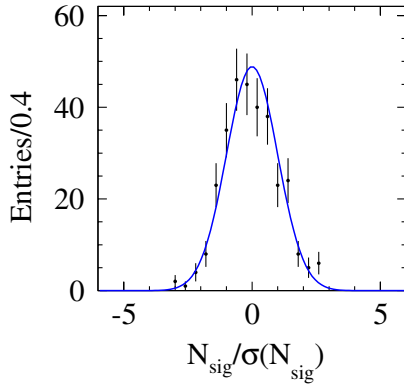


FIG. 2 (color online). $N_{\text{sig}}/\sigma(N_{\text{sig}})$ as obtained from the scanning procedure. Only statistical uncertainties are included. The curve shows the standard normal distribution with a normalization factor of 307.

is proportional to the fractional efficiency for a particular mode. The background-shape parameters (including the χ_{bJ} parameters) are all fixed to the values determined in the first step of the fit, with the exception of p and s , to allow free background normalization. The number of free parameters in each fit is seven (p_{ee} , $p_{e\mu}$, $p_{\mu\mu}$, s_{ee} , $s_{e\mu}$, $s_{\mu\mu}$, and N_{sig}), where the subscripts indicate the final state of the $\tau\tau$ -decay modes. When the scan is performed in the regions S_3 , S_4 , and S_5 , the parameters s_{ee} , $s_{e\mu}$, and $s_{\mu\mu}$ are fixed to zero.

For each scan point, the yield, N_{sig} , and its statistical uncertainty, $\sigma(N_{\text{sig}})$ are obtained from the fit. The yield significance from the data, $N_{\text{sig}}/\sigma(N_{\text{sig}})$, is shown in Fig. 2 and overlaid with a standard normal distribution. The data points are consistent with the normal distribution, and

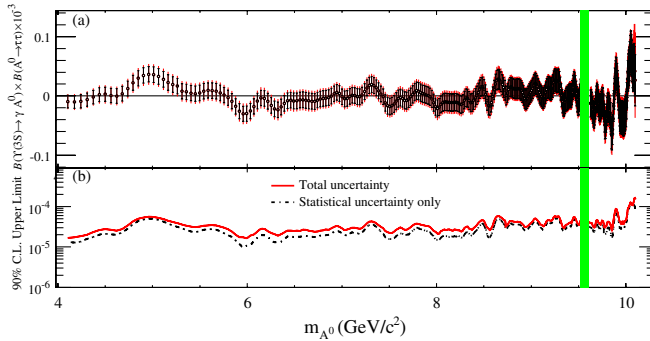


FIG. 3 (color online). (a) Product branching fractions as a function of the Higgs mass. For each point, both the statistical uncertainty (from the central value to the horizontal bar) and the total uncertainty (statistical and systematic added in quadrature) are shown (from the central value to the end of the error bar). In (b), the corresponding 90% C.L. upper limits on the product of the branching fractions versus the Higgs mass values are shown, with total uncertainty (solid line) and statistical uncertainty only (dashed line). The shaded vertical region represents the excluded mass range corresponding to the $\chi_{bJ}(2P) \rightarrow \gamma Y(1S)$ states.

therefore no significant evidence for any unknown narrow structure is observed in the scan.

Product branching fractions are determined from the signal yields at each scan point, correcting for a fit bias described below. The results are shown in Fig. 3(a). These results show no evidence for a narrow resonance in the mass range under study. Bayesian upper limits on the product of branching fractions, computed with a uniform prior at 90% C.L., are shown in Fig. 3(b). The solid line shows the limits obtained with the total uncertainties (statistical and systematic added in quadrature) while the dashed line shows the limits with statistical uncertainties only.

We measure the branching fraction $\mathcal{B}(\eta_b \rightarrow \tau^+ \tau^-) = (-0.1 \pm 4.2 \pm 2.3)\%$ at $m_{\tau^+ \tau^-} = 9.389 \text{ GeV}/c^2$, using the $\mathcal{B}(Y(3S) \rightarrow \gamma \eta_b)$ from Ref. [18]. Therefore, the 90% C.L. upper limit on $\mathcal{B}(\eta_b \rightarrow \tau^+ \tau^-)$ is 8 (7)%, considering all (statistical only) uncertainties and accounting for the expected 10 MeV width of the η_b . We note that the limit and branching fraction are insensitive to the η_b width within the expected 5–20 MeV range [18].

We account for systematic uncertainties due to tracking (2%), lepton identification (1.2–2.6%, depending on the $\tau\tau$ -decay mode), photon reconstruction efficiency (4%), and the number of $Y(3S)$ (1%). In the scan procedure, the parameters of the background shape and of the $\chi_{bJ}(2P)$ states are fixed. To estimate the systematic uncertainty related to these parameters, each parameter is varied by its estimated statistical uncertainty determined in the first step of the fit. The scan procedure is repeated for each parameter change. When calculating the systematic uncertainties from this source, the correlations between the various parameters are taken into account. The ratio between the total systematic uncertainties due to the background shape and the statistical uncertainties varies between 12% and 170%. The largest systematic variations occur for larger values of $m_{\tau^+ \tau^-}$, and are due to the uncertainty in the $q_{e\mu}$ parameter for $\tau\tau \rightarrow e\mu$. The fit bias and its uncertainty are determined by applying the fit procedure to a large number of MC experiments. Each MC sample contains a known number of signal events, while background events are generated according to the background shape. The event yield, returned by the fit, is a linear function of the number of input events. The event yield in the data is corrected using this function. The difference between the corrected and uncorrected event yield is (conservatively) considered as the systematic uncertainty due to the fit bias, which is typically small (few percent) but can be as large as 30% of the statistical uncertainty at high $m_{\tau^+ \tau^-}$. The systematic uncertainty associated with the choice of the signal shape function is determined by varying the values of the parameters in the signal CB function; the width and the power law are varied (multiplicatively) by 30% and 38%, respectively; the transition point is varied (additively) by 36%. The associated systematic

contribution is typically small (few percent) but is as large as 50% of the statistical uncertainty at large $m_{\tau^+\tau^-}$. Finally, we include a systematic uncertainty of 0.6% to account for the systematic uncertainty due to the τ branching fractions [10]. The dominant systematic uncertainties are due to the background-shape parameters, which are obtained from fitting the same data sample. Thus, we conclude that the main systematic uncertainties are primarily statistical in nature.

In summary, we have performed a search for a light Higgs boson in the radiative decays $Y(3S) \rightarrow \gamma\tau^+\tau^-$, where $\tau^+ \rightarrow e^+\nu_e\bar{\nu}_\tau$ or $\tau^+ \rightarrow \mu^+\nu_\mu\bar{\nu}_\tau$, using a data sample of 122×10^6 $Y(3S)$ events. Our search covers the mass range $4.03 < m_{\tau^+\tau^-} < 10.10$ GeV/ c^2 , excluding $9.52 < m_{\tau^+\tau^-} < 9.61$ GeV/ c^2 to veto the $\chi_{bj}(2P)$ with $\chi_{bj}(2P) \rightarrow \gamma Y(1S)$. No evidence for a signature of light Higgs boson decays to τ pairs is observed. In this mass interval, the upper limits on the product branching fraction $\mathcal{B}(Y(3S) \rightarrow \gamma A^0) \times \mathcal{B}(A^0 \rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-)$ vary between $(1.5 - 16) \times 10^{-5}$ at 90% C.L.

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*Deceased.

[†]Now at Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122, USA.

[‡]Also with Università di Perugia, Dipartimento di Fisica, Perugia, Italy.

[§]Also with Università di Roma La Sapienza, I-00185 Roma, Italy.

^{||}Now at University of South Alabama, Mobile, AL 36688, USA.

[¶]Also with Laboratoire de Physique Nucléaire et de Hautes Energies, IN2P3/CNRS, Université Pierre et Marie Curie-Paris6, Université Denis Diderot-Paris7, F-75252 Paris, France.

**Also with Università di Sassari, Sassari, Italy.

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