In situ studies on radiation resistance of nanoporous metals

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Abstract:

High energy particle radiation induces severe microstructural damage in metallic materials. Void swelling is a general consequence of radiation damage and can drastically degrade the mechanical integrity of irradiated materials. Nanoporous (NP) materials have great potentials to alleviate irradiation-induced damage due to their giant surface-to-volume ratio. Here we show, by using in situ Kr ion irradiation of nanoporous Au in a transmission electron microscope, nanopores shrink during radiation, and their shrinkage rate is pore size dependent. In addition, from temperature-dependent studies, we found that both defect density and nanopores evolve with radiation temperature. Higher temperature results in lower defect density and reduced shrinkage rate of nanopores. The sink strength of nanopores as a function of temperature is estimated. Moreover, NP Au exhibits significantly enhanced swelling resistance compared to coarse-grained Au. This study sheds light on the design of radiation-tolerant nanoporous metallic materials.