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Science

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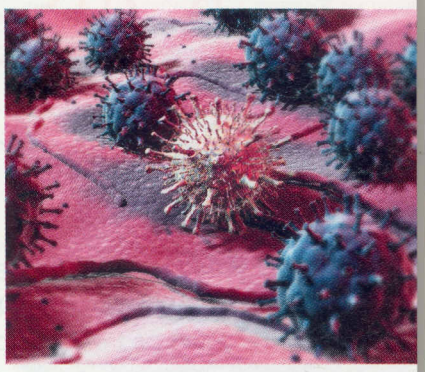

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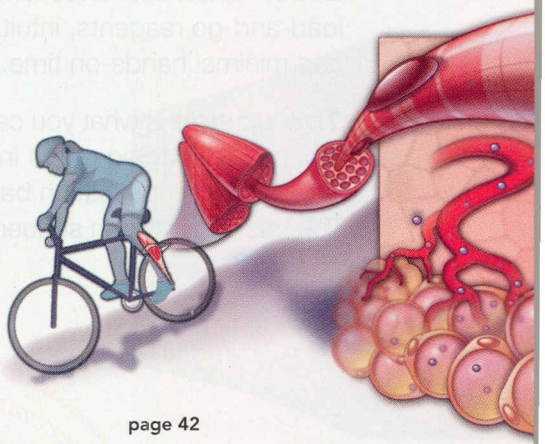

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COVER

Polarized light micrograph of a thin section of gypsum crystals ($CaSO_4 \cdot 2H_2O$). Vertical field of view ~4 millimeters. This natural and industrial mineral unexpectedly crystallizes from solution at room temperature upon a transition through a precursor, nanocrystalline bassanite ($CaSO_4 \cdot 0.5H_2O$), a usually high-temperature phase. A detailed understanding of this crystallization route could lead to a new strategy to control gypsum scale and may open an alternative route for the production of "plaster of Paris" (bassanite).

Photo: Alfred Pasieka/Photo Researchers, Inc.

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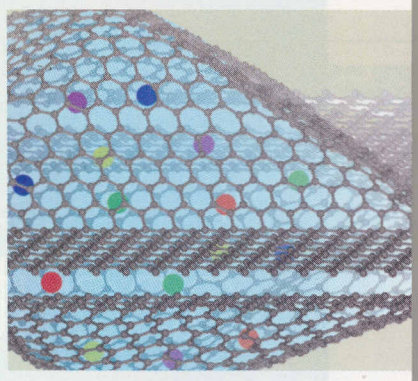

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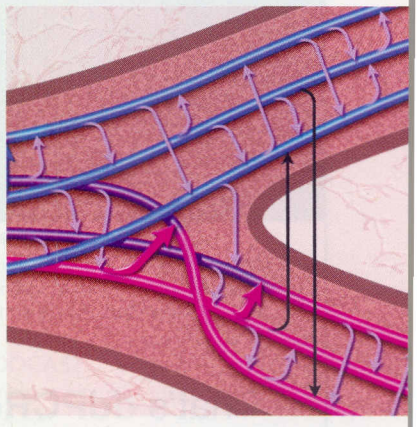

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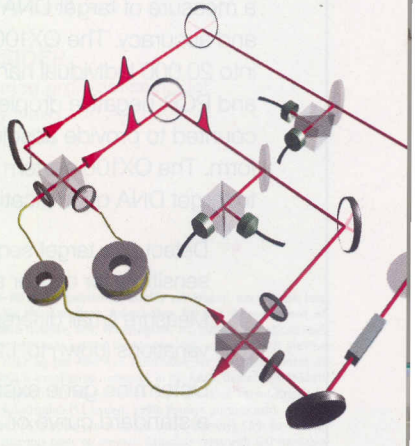

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K. Johnson et al.
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G. C. Wang et al.
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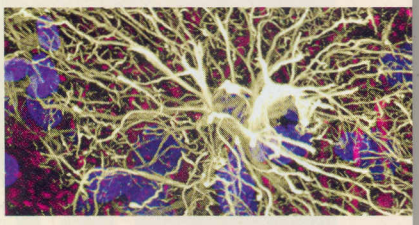

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