

# Supergiant fast X-ray transients: Observational properties and physical model

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We review observational properties of the Fast X-Ray Transients on the basis of INTEGRAL data. The number of known systems of this type grows strongly and, in many cases, the optical counterpart of a system turns out to be a supergiant of early (OB) spectral classes. We propose a reliable mechanism capable to explain the abrupt short X-ray outbursts of these transients and the long intervals of their quiescence. The mechanism assumes that a compact object in these systems is a neutron star with strong magnetic field that may accrete matter from the stellar wind of a donor star. The accretion usually stops because the magnetospheric radius exceeds the corotational radius although the radius excess is typically small. Thus, even a slight increase in the local density of the stellar wind, leading to the contraction of the magnetosphere, will switch-on the accretion process and an X-ray outburst.