

# Heteroplasmy

## Fact sheet

The mixture of mitochondrial DNA copies with mutations and wild type copies is called heteroplasmy and maintaining the balance so that the cell has enough wild type copies is important for the cell. Cells will only be affected if the percentage of its mitochondrial DNA copies that carry a mutation exceeds a certain limit, this is called the threshold. In most cells the threshold is between 50-60%, once this level is exceeded the cell will show signs of mitochondrial dysfunction. Heteroplasmy is illustrated below.

