

# 1 MitoTNT: Mitochondrial Temporal Network Tracking for 4D live- 2 cell fluorescence microscopy data

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## 20 Abstract

21 Mitochondria form a network in the cell that rapidly changes through fission, fusion, and motility.  
22 This four-dimensional (4D, x,y,z,time) temporal network has only recently been made accessible  
23 through advanced imaging methods such as lattice light-sheet microscopy. Quantitative analysis  
24 tools for the resulting datasets however have been lacking. Here we present MitoTNT, the first-  
25 in-class software for Mitochondrial Temporal Network Tracking in 4D live-cell fluorescence  
26 microscopy data. MitoTNT uses spatial proximity and network topology to compute an optimal  
27 tracking. Tracking is >90% accurate in dynamic spatial mitochondria simulations and are in  
28 agreement with published motility results in vitro. Using MitoTNT, we reveal correlated  
29 mitochondrial movement patterns, local fission and fusion fingerprints, asymmetric fission and  
30 fusion dynamics, cross-network transport patterns, and network-level responses to  
31 pharmacological manipulations. MitoTNT is implemented in python with a JupyterLab interface.  
32 The extendable and user-friendly design aims at making temporal network tracking accessible to  
33 the wider mitochondria community.

## 34 Introduction

35 Mitochondria are membranous organelles in cells that provide up to 90% of the cellular energy,  
36 and are thus fundamental to almost all processes of life from inheriting genetic information to  
37 retaining molecular order<sup>1,2</sup>. In mitochondrial diseases, the function of mitochondria is impacted,  
38 leading to diminished energy production and cell and organ dysfunction. This is particularly true  
39 in high-energy demand organs such as the muscles, heart, and brain. A vast array of diseases  
40 such as metabolic disorders<sup>3</sup>, developmental disabilities<sup>4</sup>, epilepsy<sup>5</sup>, neurodegenerative disease<sup>6-</sup>  
41 <sup>8</sup>, cancer<sup>2,9</sup>, and aging<sup>10,11</sup> may result from mitochondrial dysfunction. Progress in developing  
42 pharmacological modulation of mitochondria has been limited, potentially due to the current  
43 difficulty in quantitatively measuring the behavior of the cellular mitochondrial network with  
44 sufficient spatial and temporal detail.

45 Measuring the dynamic mitochondrial network is difficult. Far from the solitary kidney bean shapes  
46 depicted in many textbooks, interconnected somatic mitochondrial tubules fill all three spatial  
47 dimensions and undergo continuous changes in the fourth dimension of time through active and  
48 passive motion, fission, and fusion<sup>2</sup>. Conventional fluorescence microscopy technology has been  
49 inadequate to simultaneously capture the full spectrum of both mitochondrial morphology and  
50 dynamics in all four dimensions (4D). The advent of high-framerate low-phototoxicity fluorescence  
51 microscopes such as lattice light-sheet microscopy<sup>12,13</sup> (LLSM) has now made the detailed 4D  
52 characterization of temporal mitochondrial networks possible. Quantitative analysis of this data  
53 remains a problem however.

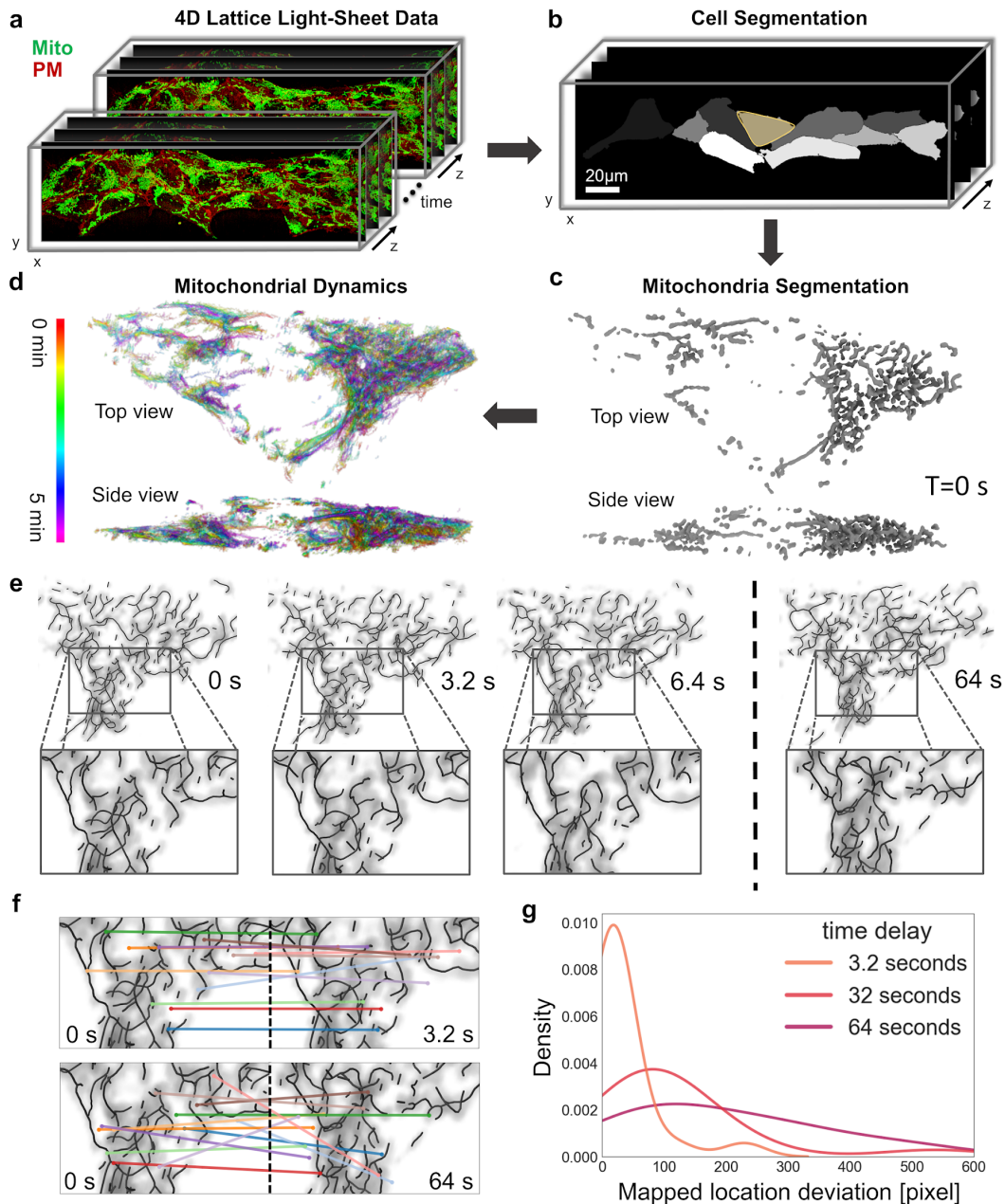
54 The majority of existing quantitative analysis software was designed for two-dimensional (2D)  
55 fluorescence images of mitochondria (MyToe<sup>14</sup>, MitoSPT<sup>15</sup>, QuoVadoPro<sup>16</sup>). For three-  
56 dimensional (3D) fluorescence images, MitoGraph<sup>17-19</sup> is a unique tool for the segmentation and  
57 quantitation of 3D mitochondrial network morphology, yet lacks temporal analysis. The software  
58 packages TrackMate<sup>20</sup> and Mitometer<sup>21</sup> can operate on 4D time-lapse fluorescence microscopy  
59 data by performing center-of-mass tracking. However, the abstraction of every mitochondrial  
60 fragment as single object poses limitations for accurate sub-fragment level information and  
61 network tracking.

62 Here we present MitoTNT, the first-in-class software for the tracking of the 4D mitochondrial  
63 network. MitoTNT builds on the established tools MitoGraph<sup>17-19</sup> for segmentation and  
64 ChimeraX<sup>22,23</sup> for intuitive visualization. Mitochondria tracking is achieved by solving a linear  
65 assignment problem (LAP) that utilizes both spatial and network topology information. Tracking  
66 accuracy was validated both in-silico and in-vitro. A reaction-diffusion simulation of the  
67 mitochondrial network was created to provide in-silico ground truth for testing. In vitro data of  
68 mitochondrial networks was created using LLSM in human induced pluripotent stem cells  
69 (hiPSCs). We demonstrate that MitoTNT's high-resolution mitochondria network tracking is  
70 accurate and provides an unprecedented level of detail for mitochondria motility measurement,  
71 fission/fusion event detection, and temporal network analysis.

## 72 Results

### 73 Preserved topology enables 4D mitochondrial network tracking

74 Our first aim was to confirm that high-framerate fluorescence imaging of the 4D mitochondrial  
75 network retains enough information for reliable tracking. The somatic mitochondrial networks of  
76 tall cuboid hiPSCs were used as a model system (Fig. 1a). LLSM was used to acquire imaging  
77 volumes at 3.2s per volume. After deskewing and deconvolution, individual cells were  
78 computationally segmented based on the plasma membrane signal (Fig. 1b and Supplementary  
79 Fig. 1). MitoGraph<sup>17-19</sup> was then used to segment the mitochondrial network for consecutive  
80 imaging volumes (Fig. 1c,d). At 3.2s frame interval, we observed that changes of the 4D  
81 mitochondrial network are predominantly limited to small movements and remodeling events while  
82 the overall network structure appeared to be conserved from frame to frame (Fig. 1e). We then  
83 quantified this conservation at several acquisition frame rates by applying the scale-invariant  
84 feature transform (SIFT)<sup>24</sup>. For small time intervals, SIFT was able to correctly assign network  
85 features between frames (Fig. 1f top), but failed for longer time intervals (Fig. 1f bottom). We  
86 found that at high volumetric frame rates, mitochondrial network topology is preserved (Fig. 1g).  
87 In the next section, we aim to use this conserved temporal information to achieve 4D mitochondrial  
88 network tracking.



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90 **Figure 1 | Mitochondrial network topology is preserved in high-framerate 4D fluorescence**

91 **microscopy data. a**, Representative 4D (3D+time) lattice light-sheet microscopy data of a hiPSC

92 colony labeled with MitoTracker (mitochondria, green) and expressing CAAX-RFP (plasma

93 membrane, red). **b**, Individual cells in the colony are segmented based on the plasma membrane

94 marker. **c**, Mitochondria fluorescence signal in a single cell is segmented using MitoGraph<sup>17-19</sup>.

95 **d**, Mitochondrial network skeleton dynamics over 5 min every 6.4s (time red to purple).

96 **e**, Mitochondrial fluorescence density and segmented network skeleton are overlaid and shown for

97 frame numbers 0,1,2,20 at frame interval 3.2s. **f**, Scale-invariant feature transform (SIFT) maps

98 image features for two frames separated by 3.2s (top), and 64s (bottom). **g**, Pixel deviation

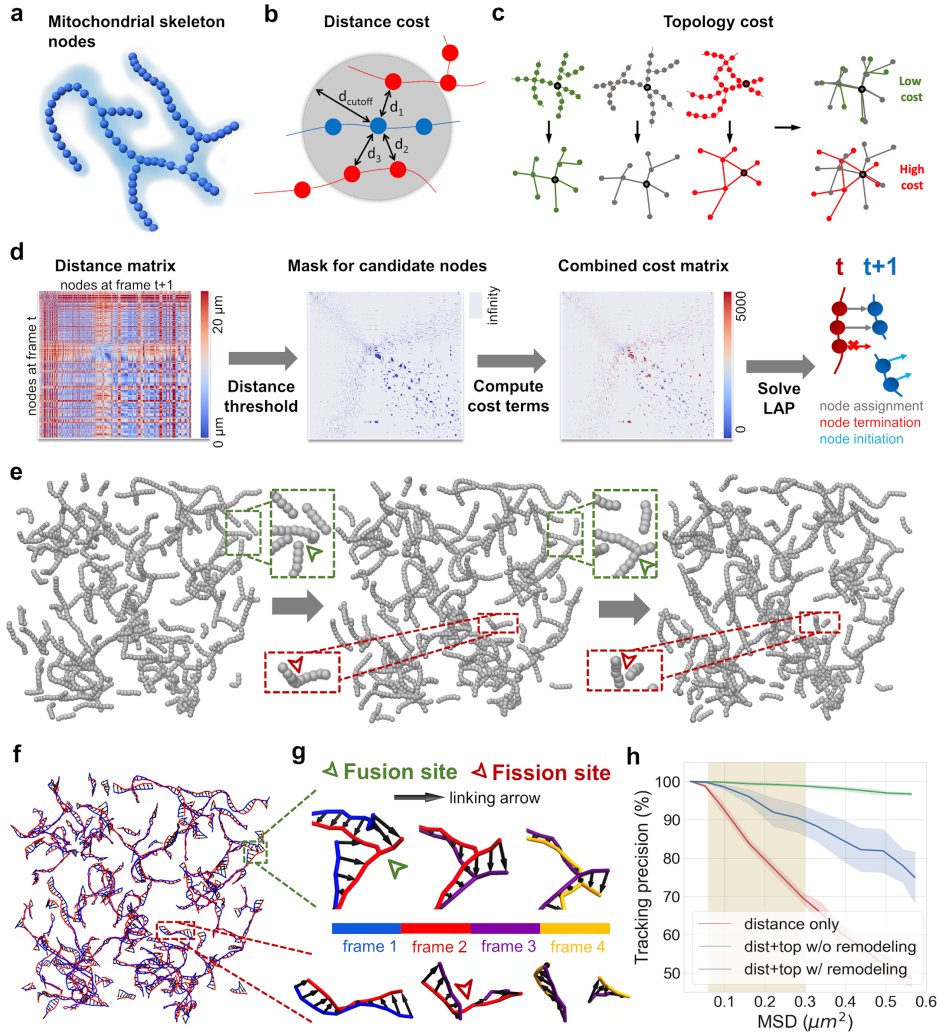
99 between SIFT-mapped feature locations at different time intervals.

#### 100 **4D mitochondrial network tracking using spatial and topological optimization**

101 We formulated 4D mitochondrial temporal network tracking as an optimization problem that uses  
102 information preserved in consecutive frames. We chose equally spaced nodes along the  
103 mitochondria skeleton as the fundamental units that are tracked (Fig. 2a). Such a discretization  
104 of the mitochondrial network can be automatically calculated using the software MitoGraph<sup>17-19</sup>.

105 In our previous observation, we found that spatial proximity (Fig. 2b) and network topology (Fig.  
106 2c) are conserved characteristics that likely allow temporal tracking. At high framerates,  
107 mitochondrial motion is limited, and the nodes located close to the current position in the next  
108 frame tend to be the correct candidates. However, this distance metric quickly decorrelates in  
109 dense network regions. Similarly, the mitochondrial network topology remains relatively stable at  
110 high framerates and only decorrelates at high fission/fusion rates of the network. We developed  
111 a topological dissimilarity score to capture this parameter. The score is computed using a fast  
112 alignment-based graph comparison method (see Supplementary Note 4) to measure how  
113 different the network topologies around any two candidate nodes are. Nodes embedded in a  
114 similar local network topology are more likely to be linked in time.

115 Similar to established particle/object tracking methods<sup>20,21,25</sup>, we formulated the network tracking  
116 problem as a linear assignment problem (LAP) that solves for the optimal node assignment  
117 through constraints (Fig. 2d). First, the distances between nodes in two consecutive frames  $T$ ,  
118  $T+1$  were computed as a pairwise distance matrix. Next, local distance thresholds were estimated  
119 for each node at frame  $T$  (see Supplementary Note 3). Nodes located within these thresholds at  
120 frame  $T+1$  were considered candidate nodes while those beyond were ignored. Then, network  
121 topology was incorporated using the topological dissimilarity score for each candidate node pair  
122 (node at  $T$  and candidate node at  $T+1$ ). The distance and topology costs were then combined  
123 with equal weights. Mitochondrial dynamics and imaging artifacts often contribute to fluctuations  
124 in the number of skeleton nodes. To account for this fluctuation, we added additional constraints  
125 to the final cost matrix (see Supplementary Note 3), thereby permitting three options for a temporal  
126 assignment: 1) link two nodes between frames, 2) terminate a node in the current frame, or 3)  
127 initiate a new node in the next frame. Finally, the frame-to-frame tracking result is given as the  
128 optimal node assignment to the LAP by minimizing the global sum of the final cost matrix. Gap  
129 closing is performed at the end of frame-to-frame tracking in order to connect prematurely  
130 terminated node tracks, using the same cost terms (Supplementary Note 5).



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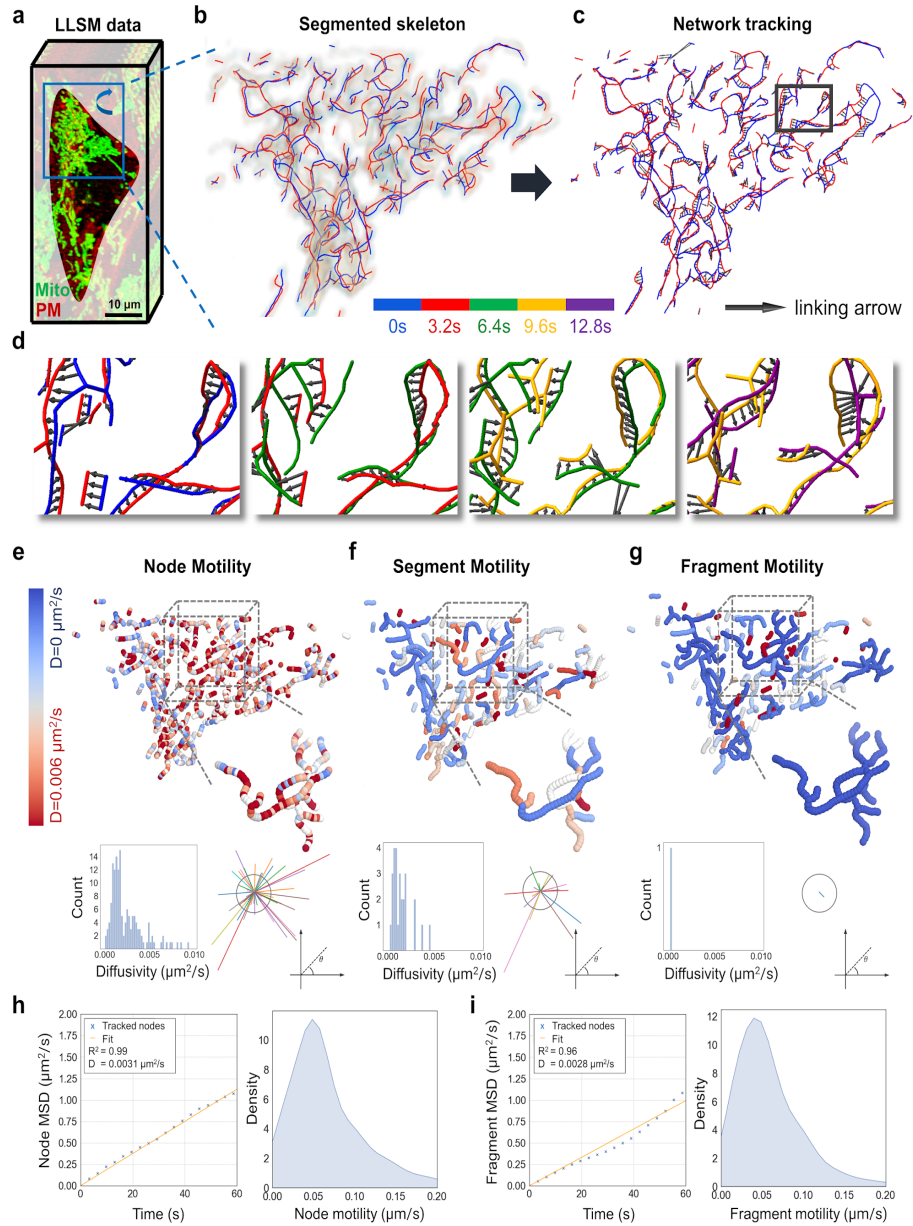
**Figure 2 | Algorithm design and in-silico validation of 4D mitochondria network tracking.**

**a**, Discretized nodes along the segmented mitochondria skeleton serve as the basis for network tracking. Cloud: fluorescence density; cylinder: segmented skeleton; sphere: skeleton node. **b-c**, Cost terms used for the linear assignment problem (LAP) formulation of node tracking. Spatial proximity is measured as distances between nodes within two consecutive frames. Topology cost is computed using a graph comparison that assigns low cost for similar local topology. **d**, LAP formulation of node tracking for the mitochondrial network. From left to right: 1) pairwise distance matrix for nodes at frames  $T$  and  $T+1$ ; 2) thresholds to eliminate nodes too far to be tracked; 3) spatial separation and network topology constraints; 4) the solution to the LAP yields the tracking results as linked node pairs, along with terminated and initiated nodes. **e**, Three consecutive frames of a reaction-diffusion mitochondrial network simulation with representative fusion (green) and fission (red) events. **f**, Temporal network tracking for the simulated mitochondria for two consecutive timepoints (blue skeleton: frame 1, red skeleton: frame 2, black arrows: node tracking). **g**, magnification of example in-silico fusion (green triangle) and fission (red triangle) events in **f**. **h**, Accuracy of in-silico tracking compared to node mean squared displacement (MSD),  $N=10$  simulations. MSD relates to frame as  $MSD = 6D\tau$ . Commonly achievable frame rates with LLSM highlighted in yellow.

149 **In-silico validation of MitoTNT through spatial reaction-diffusion simulations of**  
150 **mitochondrial networks**

151 Our next aim was to validate our tracking algorithm using synthetic data as ground-truth. A meso-  
152 scale reaction-diffusion simulation was developed to model temporal mitochondrial networks (Fig.  
153 2e). We used the ReaDDy<sup>26,27</sup> framework to model mitochondria as connected mitochondrial  
154 skeleton particles that were held together by bond, angle, and repulsion potentials. Mitochondrial  
155 motion was assumed to be diffusive only. The spatial distribution and density of the in-silico  
156 mitochondrial network was modeled after in-vitro imaged mitochondrial networks that we found to  
157 resemble a mixture of Erdős–Rényi random networks (Supplementary Fig. 4a-b). Fission and  
158 fusion were included as structural reactions such that fission reactions remove a bond between  
159 skeleton nodes and fusion reactions create a bond between unbound skeleton nodes.  
160 Experimental observations of fission and fusion rates were adjusted through iterative sampling of  
161 fission and fusion reaction rates (see Supplementary Note 5).

162 Tracking accuracy of our algorithm was subsequently tested using this simulation as ground-truth.  
163 We found that each fragment of the mitochondrial network, as well as fission and fusion events  
164 are tracked faithfully with few mis-assignments (See Fig. 2f,g). We found that the distance  
165 constraint alone results in relatively poor tracking performance (Fig. 2h, red curve) likely due to  
166 ambiguous assignments in the dense mitochondrial network. In contrast, when paired with the  
167 topology constraint, consistently reliable tracking was achieved with fission and fusion switched  
168 off (95-100% accuracy, Fig. 2h green) or on (> 90% accuracy, Fig. 2h blue) in the regime relevant  
169 for LLSM (shaded region, see Supplementary Note 6).



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 171 **Figure 3 | In-vitro validation and evaluation of 4D mitochondria network tracking.** **a**, LLSM  
 172 volumetric snapshot of a segmented cell. Green: mitochondrial network. Red: plasma membrane.  
 173 **b**, Zoom-in on the mitochondrial network in **a**). Fluorescence signal and segmented network  
 174 skeleton are overlaid for two consecutive frames (blue: 0s, red: 3.2s). **c**, Tracking of the network  
 175 nodes for the two frames in **b**) visualized by black arrows. **d**, Zoom-in to a representative region  
 176 (box) in **c**) tracked over 12.8s. The skeletons are colored in blue, red, green, yellow, and purple  
 177 in the order of time. See also Movie 1. **e-g**, Top: Mitochondrial nodes are colored by diffusivity at  
 178 node, segment, or fragment levels from high (red) to low (blue) diffusivity. Bottom left: Distribution  
 179 of diffusivity values, bottom right: linking vectors compared to a fixed reference vector. **h-i**, MSD  
 180 curve and motility distribution for nodes **h**) and fragments **i**).



## 181 **In-vitro validation and evaluation of 4D mitochondrial network tracking**

182 We next validated our tracking algorithm on LLSM data of 4D mitochondrial networks in cultured  
183 cells. CAAX-RFP hiPSC colonies were labeled with MitoTracker Green and imaged at 3.2  
184 seconds per volumetric frame for a duration of 5 minutes. Cells and mitochondrial network were  
185 segmented (Fig. 3a-b) and MitoTNT used to track the network (Fig. 3c and Movie 1). Careful  
186 examination of the tracking results showed that the mitochondrial network skeleton is faithfully  
187 tracked over time (see Fig. 3d). Depending on the level of granularity required for the biological  
188 question of interest, tracks for the nodes (Fig. 3e) that belong to the same segment (Fig. 3f), or  
189 the same fragment (Fig. 3g) can be obtained. We found that somatic mitochondrial motility is  
190 diffusive not only on the fragment-level but also on the mitochondrial skeleton node-level (Fig. 3h,  
191 3i, S6). We observed, that the high-resolution tracking on the level of mitochondrial skeleton  
192 nodes illustrates that mitochondrial motility and dynamics exhibit complex spatial and temporal  
193 details and a heterogeneity in speed and orientation (Fig 3e-g, lower panel). Finally, we compared  
194 our high-resolution tracking results to previously published values of lower-resolution center-of-  
195 mass tracking. We found that our average mitochondrial network fragment motility for hiPSC  
196 mitochondria ( $0.06 \pm 0.03 \mu\text{m/s}$ ) is in good agreement with motility data from 3D spheroids  
197 ( $0.03 \mu\text{m/s}$ ) and 2D adherent cells ( $0.08 \mu\text{m/s}$ ) (Supplementary Figure 6).

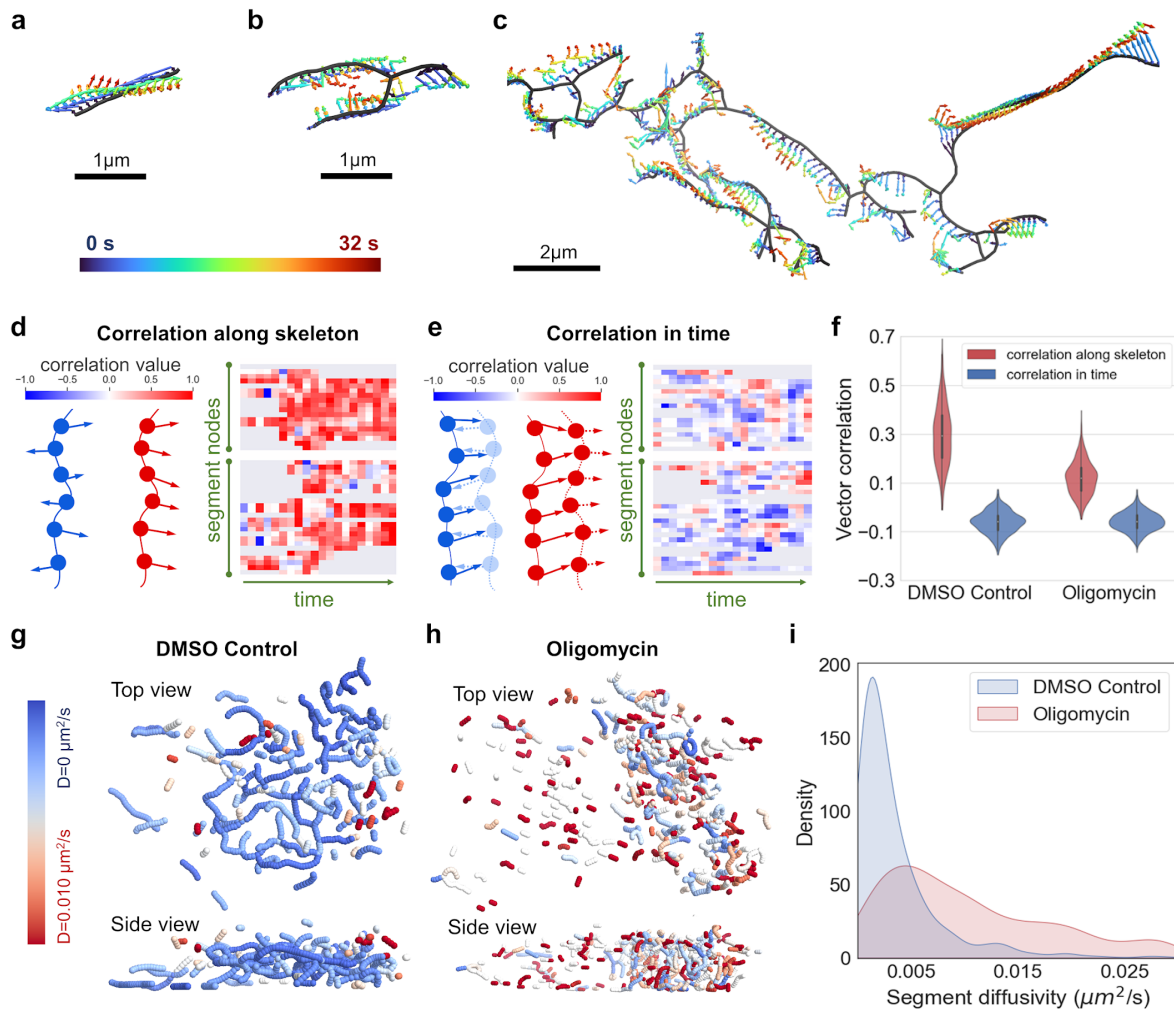
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## 199 **High-resolution mitochondria tracking reveals heterogeneous sub-fragment motility and** 200 **correlated movement patterns**

201 We observed individual fragments displaying a wide range of movement patterns that include  
202 translational, and rotational components. Branches of the same mitochondrial fragment can  
203 simultaneously undergo motions with different orientations and modes. Here we showcased three  
204 examples: 1) a small fragment exhibiting twisting motion (Fig. 4a), 2) a medium-sized fragment  
205 exhibiting concentric inward motion (Fig. 4b), and 3) a large fragment exhibiting convolution of  
206 different motility patterns (Fig. 4c).

207 To further investigate network branch motility, we correlated tracking vectors between adjacent  
208 nodes on the same segment, and between the same node at consecutive frames. We observed  
209 that spatial correlation along the segment skeleton is predominantly positive (Fig. 4d)  
210 demonstrating a concerted motion. In contrast, temporal correlation between frames is  
211 predominantly zero (random motion) to slightly negative (oscillating motion), while interspersed  
212 with short period of positive values (directional motion) (Fig. 4e). This data confirms that  
213 mitochondrial branches move as a unit, but in a relatively random manner (Fig. 4f, control).

214 We employed the ATP synthase inhibitor oligomycin that induces mitochondrial fragmentation<sup>28</sup>  
215 to investigate if our motion correlation findings are dependent upon network morphologies (Fig.  
216 4g,h). We observed that while temporal motion correlation remains similar, the spatial motion  
217 correlation dropped. Furthermore, we observed that drug induced fragments move considerably  
218 faster compared to control (Fig. 4i).

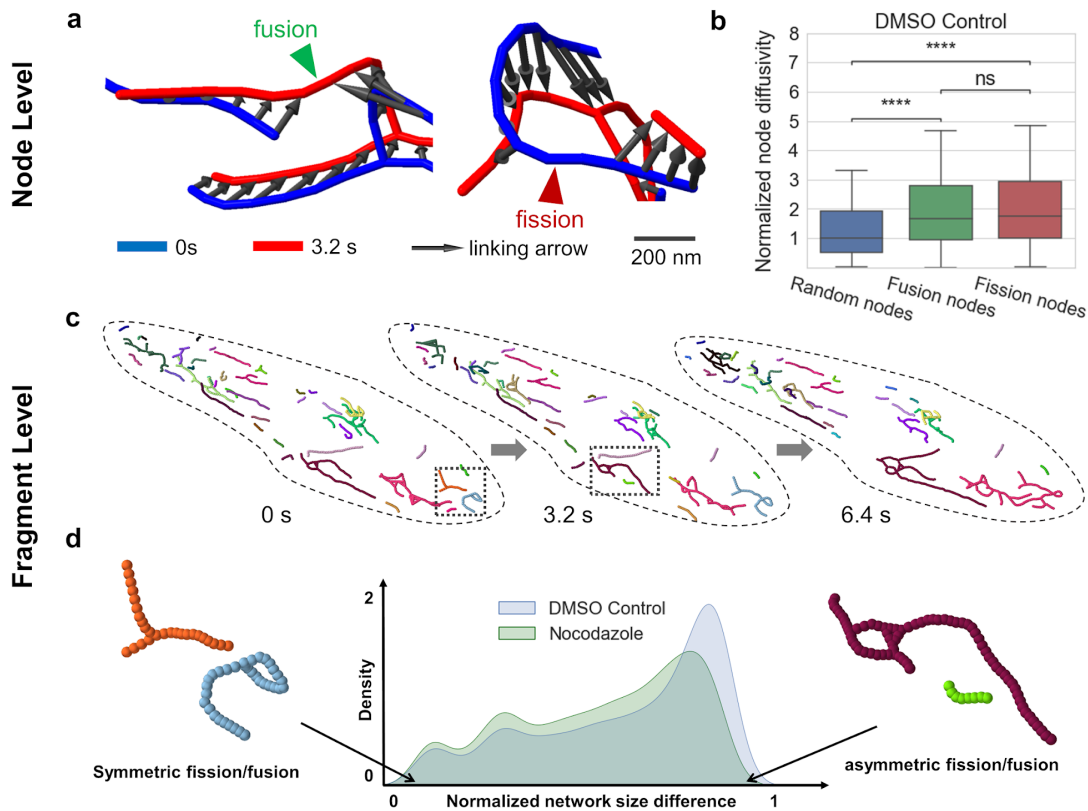


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 220 **Figure 4. | Mitochondrial network motility analysis.** a-c, Tracking of three representative  
 221 mitochondrial network fragments for 32 seconds (time blue to red). a, A small fragment displays  
 222 twisting motion. b, A medium-size fragment displays inward motion. c, A large fragment displays  
 223 complex motion patterns. d, spatial tracking vector correlations between neighboring nodes. Left:  
 224 illustration. Right: Heatmap of vector correlation for segment nodes (columns) at different  
 225 timepoints (rows). e, temporal tracking vector correlation for the same node at consecutive  
 226 frames. Left: illustration. Right: Heatmap of correlation values for segment nodes (columns)  
 227 at different timepoints (rows). f, Violin plot of spatial (red) and temporal (blue) correlation values  
 228 between control and oligomycin-treated cells. g-h, Spatial structure of somatic mitochondrial  
 229 network overlaid with mitochondria segment diffusivity in control and oligomycin-treated cells. i,  
 230 Kernel-smoothed distribution of segment diffusivity for 2552 segments in control cells (blue), and  
 231 2376 segments in oligomycin-treated cells (red).

232 **Mitochondrial network tracking reveals local fission and fusion fingerprints and**  
233 **asymmetric fission and fusion preferences**

234 Our high-resolution network tracking allows us to precisely locate fission and fusion events in the  
235 mitochondrial network with sub-fragment spatial resolution and high temporal fidelity (Figs. 5a  
236 S5). To provide mechanistic insights into network remodeling, we compared the motility between  
237 randomly selected nodes and nodes undergoing fission and fusion. We observed that diffusivity  
238 for nodes undergoing fission and fusion is nearly two times the diffusivity for randomly chosen  
239 nodes (Fig. 5b). This data suggests that mitochondrial fission and fusion remodeling might involve  
240 local rearrangements at the event site as suggested previously<sup>29</sup>.

241 Based on node tracking, each individual mitochondrial network fragment can be tracked (Fig. 5c)  
242 and the selectivity of fission and fusion events recorded in terms of fragment size. For each fission  
243 or fusion event, the normalized network fragment size difference was computed, with values close  
244 to 0 corresponding to a symmetric fission/fusion (Fig. 5d, left), and values close to 1 indicating  
245 fragments of drastically different sizes (asymmetric fission/fusion) (Fig. 5d, right). We found that  
246 there is a significant portion of asymmetric fission/fusion events (Fig. 5d, blue). Asymmetric  
247 fission/fusion events between large healthy mitochondria and small unhealthy mitochondria have  
248 been proposed to separate dysfunctional mitochondria targeted for mitophagy, or rescue  
249 damaged mitochondria by supplying essential materials<sup>30,31</sup>. We hypothesized that this dynamic  
250 selectivity bias is facilitated by the cytoskeleton. In cells treated with 10  $\mu$ M of nocodazole to  
251 disrupt microtubules, we observed a decrease in asymmetric fission/fusion (Fig. 5d, green). This  
252 observation points to a potential role of cytoskeleton in mediating selective fission/fusion as has  
253 previously been suggested<sup>32</sup>.



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**Figure 5. | Mitochondrial network remodeling analysis.** **a**, Representative snapshots of tracked fusion event (left), and fission event (right). **b**, Node diffusivity is significantly lower for randomly selected nodes (blue) as compared to nodes undergoing fusion (green) and fission (red). Student's t-test used, and p-values are 6.565E-25, and 1.237E-24, for random vs. fusion nodes and random vs. fission nodes, respectively. **c**, Representative tracking of mitochondrial fragments in hiPSCs over three timepoints (one color per fragment) **d**, Analysis of fission/fusion preferences with respect to fragment size shows that asymmetric fission/fusion events are more likely to occur. This pattern is less pronounced but preserved in nocodazole-treated hiPSCs with disrupted microtubules.

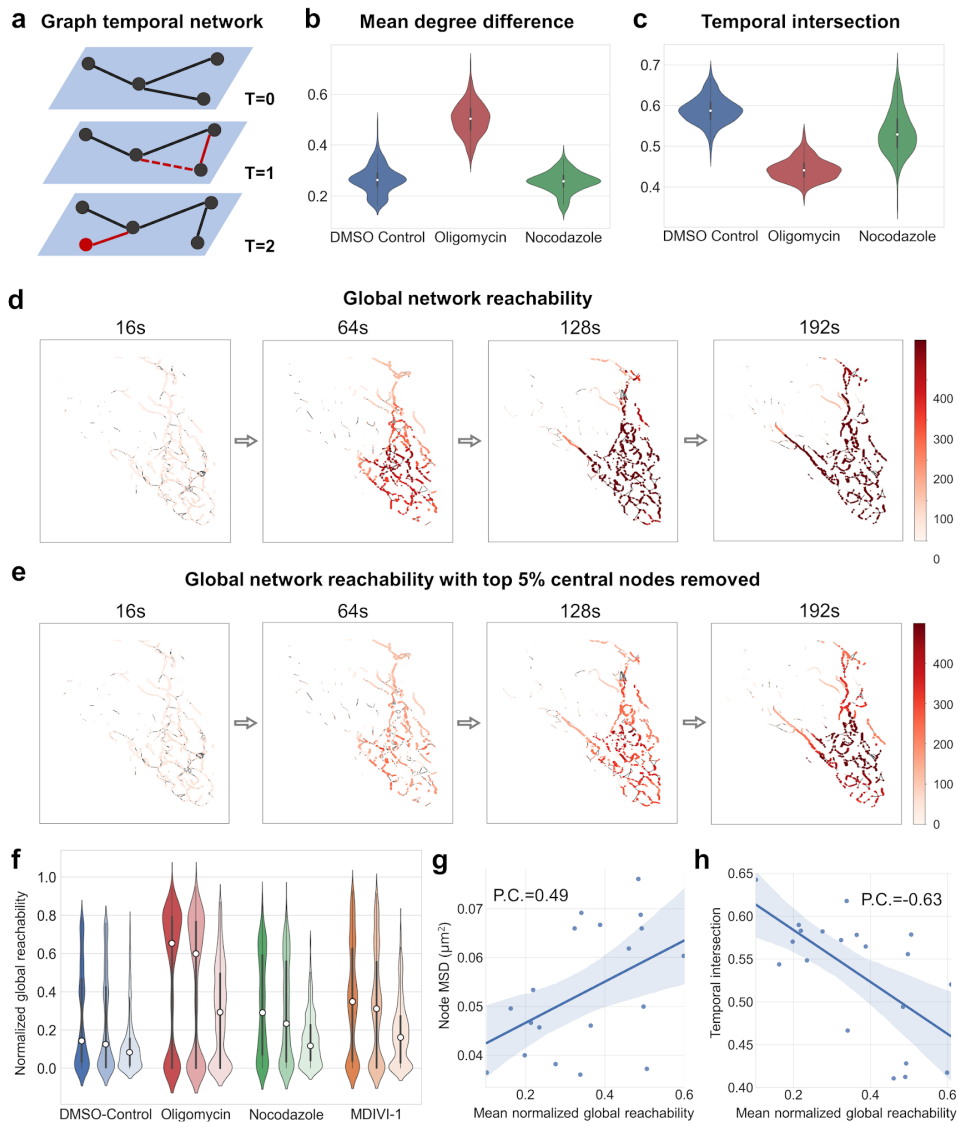
264 **4D mitochondrial network tracking shows drug-dependent network remodeling rates,**  
265 **network transport, and network resiliency**

266 4D mitochondrial network tracking allowed us to investigate the mitochondrial network from the  
267 perspective of a graph temporal network (Fig. 6a). Specifically, it is now possible to quantify a)  
268 remodeling of the mitochondrial network, b) flux across the network as it moves spatially and is  
269 being remodeled, and c) resiliency of the network to damage.

270 To quantify mitochondrial network remodeling, the mean degree difference (DD) and the temporal  
271 intersection (TI) were calculated. A low DD indicates a low rate of nodes breaking off from their  
272 neighbors and reconnecting with other nodes. Inversely, A low TI implies that the network is very  
273 dynamic and does undergo drastic remodeling. We found that control hiPSCs showed a low DD  
274 of 0.28 (Fig. 6b) and a high TI 0.58 (Fig. 6c), indicating that the network is relatively stable with  
275 relatively little turnover. In contrast, when treated with oligomycin, we observed a 0.52 DD and  
276 0.44 TI indicating a high level of network remodeling. We hypothesized that cytoskeleton  
277 influences drive network remodeling events. However, treatment with nocodazole did not induce  
278 drastic changes in neither metric for network remodeling (Fig. 6b,c).

279 To quantify transport across the 4D mitochondrial network, we simulated a random walk on the  
280 tracked temporal mitochondrial networks and measured the process in the form of network  
281 reachability (see Supplementary Note 9). Reachability for a node indicates how easily can  
282 material/information reach this node from various parts of the overall network, via the time-  
283 respecting paths defined by the network tracking. In control conditions, we observed that almost  
284 every part of the network was in reach within ~120s (Fig. 6d) and that network nodes showed a  
285 low average reachability of 0.18 (Fig. 6f). Comparatively higher reachability was reached with  
286 nocodazole (0.29), mdivi-1 (0.35), and in particular with oligomycin (0.64).

287 To quantify mitochondrial network resiliency, mitochondrial node reachability was calculated in  
288 networks where the top 5% of highest connected nodes were removed, as measured by  
289 betweenness of centrality. We observed that the global reachability for a large number of nodes  
290 was significantly reduced, particularly those isolated from the larger well-connected fragments.  
291 This observation suggests certain central nodes may be essential to the material and information  
292 transport within the cellular mitochondrial network (Fig. 6f). To quantify the relationship between  
293 network motility, remodeling, and reachability, we calculated the Pearson's correlation coefficients  
294 between the mean normalized global reachability, the mean node displacement (Fig. 6g), and the  
295 node TI (Fig. 6h). The positive correlation with node displacement, and negative correlation with  
296 TI suggests that long-range movements and enhanced network remodeling both lead to quicker  
297 percolation through the network.



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**Figure 6 | Temporal characteristics of mitochondrial network remodeling, flux, and damage resilience.** **a**, Temporal networks display node and edge dynamics that have an influence on network transport and resilience (newly added or removed nodes/edges highlighted in red). **b**, Mean degree difference between control, oligomycin, and nocodazole. **c**, Temporal intersection between control, oligomycin, and nocodazole. **d**, Global network reachability in a representative somatic mitochondrial network depicted as a color gradient (dark: high reachability, light: low reachability). **e**, Global network reachability where the top 5% highest betweenness-centrality nodes were removed. **f**, Mean normalized global reachability in different drug induced conditions. Triplets indicate no nodes removed (left), 5% random nodes removed (middle), and 5% most connected nodes removed (right). **g,h**, Correlation of network reachability with node MSD and temporal intersection.

## 310 Discussion

311 Here we presented MitoTNT, the first-in-class software for mitochondrial temporal network  
312 tracking in 4D volumetric fluorescence microscopy data. Recent advances in low phototoxicity  
313 volumetric live cell imaging allow fast high-resolution acquisition of the somatic mitochondrial  
314 temporal network. Now, MitoTNT allows the automated tracking of this temporal network for the  
315 first time. Based on mitochondria skeleton segmentation and discretization through MitoGraph,  
316 MitoTNT solves the linking problem of discretized mitochondria skeleton nodes through time. An  
317 efficient, alignment-based graph comparison algorithm was used to capture network topology  
318 information and pair it with distance constraints for temporal linking. Tracking was validated using  
319 both in-silico and in-vitro methods. We created polymer-based spatial mitochondrial simulations  
320 that include fission and fusion reactions and are parameterized to reproduce experimental  
321 observations to quantify the tracking fidelity of our algorithm. We found that MitoTNT performs  
322 with >90% tracking accuracy on these datasets. When comparing tracking performance on  
323 experimental in-vitro datasets, we found that MitoTNT faithfully tracks the 4D mitochondrial  
324 network and reproduces experimental observables such as mitochondrial diffusivity and speed  
325 as compared to published values in the literature. Based on fluorescence microscopy and  
326 computational image segmentation, MitoTNT is limited by a microscope's ability to record high  
327 signal to noise volumetric images of the mitochondrial network to ensure high quality  
328 segmentation. Future efforts might use advances in machine learning<sup>33-35</sup> to improve  
329 segmentation quality and reliability.

330 We highlighted three applications of MitoTNT: 1) high-resolution mitochondria network motility  
331 analysis, 2) node-level mitochondrial fission/fusion analysis, and 3) mitochondria temporal  
332 network analysis. For motility analysis, we showed that the previously hidden complexity of sub-  
333 fragment motility can now be characterized. By coupling network sub-compartment motility with  
334 other mitochondrial fluorescence readouts (e.g., membrane potential, reactive oxygen species,  
335 mtDNA nucleoid), future studies employing network tracking will have the potential to investigate  
336 the functional aspects of mitochondrial motion in cellular physiology.

337 For node-level fission/fusion analysis, we showed that mitochondrial fission and fusion dynamics  
338 can be registered at sub-fragment resolution. Compared to fission/fusion detection for object-  
339 based tracking, our approach is highly versatile in distinguishing sub-types of mitochondrial  
340 remodeling events such as kiss-and-run events, sustained fission/fusion events, intra-fragment  
341 events, and inter-fragment events. We predict, that the high spatio-temporal resolution offered  
342 through mitochondrial network tracking will become instrumental in studying selective  
343 fission/fusion<sup>32</sup> and mitochondrial quality control<sup>7,36</sup>.

344 The characterization of somatic mitochondrial networks as temporal networks through MitoTNT  
345 now allows using the full power of mathematical models for graph temporal networks for  
346 mitochondria analysis, for example determining community formation within the mitochondrial  
347 network, understanding the efficiency of metabolic flow, or characterizing various cell types and  
348 states using network motifs. By combining 4D fluorescence imaging, network tracking, and  
349 functional simulation, cellular metabolic state profiling based on microscopy data can now be  
350 conducted, opening the door for high-content screening of such states. We hope that MitoTNT's  
351 extendable software design and open-source code availability will contribute to forming a

352 community around mitochondria temporal network tracking and will allow the field to quickly  
353 explore the indicated directions.

## 354 Methods

### 355 **Human induced pluripotent stem cell (hiPSC) culture**

356 All studies involving hiPSCs were performed under approval from the University of California  
357 San Diego IRB/ESCRO committee. WTC hiPSCs expressing the CAAX domain of K-ras tagged  
358 with mTagRFP-T were created at the Allen Institute for Cell Science and obtained through the  
359 UCB Cell Culture Facility. hiPSC colonies were expanded on dishes coated with growth factor-  
360 reduced Matrigel (Corning, 354230) in mTeSR1 (Stemcell Technologies, 85850) containing 1%  
361 penicillin/streptomycin (Gibco, 15140122). Colonies were washed with DPBS (Gibco,  
362 14190144) and detached with accutase (Stemcell Technologies, 07920) before plating onto  
363 imaging dishes. Cultures were tested routinely for mycoplasma.

364

### 365 **Drug treatments**

366 All drugs were dissolved in DMSO to make a stock solution and diluted in PBS to prepare a  
367 100X working stock. Cells were treated with oligomycin (20uM, 2 hr), nocodazole (5 uM, 30  
368 min), and MDIVI-1 (10 uM, 12 hr) without wash.

369

### 370 **Live cell imaging**

371 CAAX-RFP hiPSCs were stained with 100 nM MitoTracker Green FM (Invitrogen, M7514) for 30  
372 min prior to imaging. Cells were plated onto 25 mm MatTek dishes and imaged in phenol-red  
373 free mTeSR1 (Stemcell Technologies, 85850) . Cells were kept under 5% CO<sub>2</sub> and 37 degrees  
374 C. For imaging, we used Zeiss LLSM 7 with 10× N.A. 0.4 illumination objective lens and 48×  
375 N.A. 1.0 detection objective lens. We acquired images in two channels: green channel with  
376 excitation at 488nm and emission at 512nm; red channel with excitation at 561nm and emission  
377 at 597nm. For both channels we used 18% laser power and 8ms exposure. The illumination  
378 light-sheet was the Sinc3 beam with length 15 μm, thickness 650 nm and no side lobes. The  
379 volume size was 2048 x 448 x 57 pixels or 296.94 x 64.96 x 8.12 μm with isotropic pixel size  
380 145 nm after coverglass transformation. Images were saved with bit depth 16 bits. For each  
381 region, we imaged 93 frames with frame rate 3.26 s per volume for total 5 min. For LLSM data  
382 processing, we used the Lattice Lightsheet 7 Processing Module on ZEN Blue for  
383 deconvolution, deskew, and cover glass transformation. Further processing is then done using  
384 MitoGraph and MitoTNT.

## 385 Code availability

386 Please find links to documentation, source code and other information at <https://www.mitotnt.org>.  
387 Specifically, code, installation guide, and sample data are available at  
388 <https://github.com/pylattice/mitoTNT>.



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401

### 402 Contributions

403 Z.W., P.N., and J.S. conceived of the project; Z.W. developed the tracking tools, performed the  
404 modeling, cell culture, and imaging; P.N. developed and implemented the graph-based tools; C.T.  
405 developed the cell lines and performed cell culture and imaging; S.T. performed cell culture; H.H.  
406 performed the imaging, Z.W., P.N., and J.S. wrote the manuscript.

407

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## 410 Ethics declarations

411 Competing interests

412 The authors declare no competing interests.

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