The invention provides methods to monitor cell free nucleic acids. The method comprises obtaining a plasma sample from a subject known to have a cancer characterized by a pair of mutually exclusive mutations specific to the cancer; isolating cell free nucleic acids from the plasma sample obtained from the subject; measuring the amount a housekeeping gene and/or total DNA in the cell free nucleic acids isolated from the plasma sample to confirm that the amount of housekeeping gene and/or total DNA in the sample is within a selected range; measuring the amount of a first of the pair of mutually exclusive mutations specific to the cancer in the cell free nucleic acids isolated from the plasma sample; and indicating in a report that the subject has the first mutation when (a) the amount of the housekeeping gene and/or total DNA in the cell free nucleic acids isolated from the plasma sample is within the selected range and (b) the amount of the first mutation is increased as compared to a control amount, wherein the control amount is determined by measuring the apparent amount of the first mutation in control cell free nucleic acids isolated from plasma samples obtained from control subjects known to have the second of the pair of mutually exclusive mutations specific to the cancer using measuring conditions substantially the same as those used to measure the amount of the first mutation in the cell free nucleic acids isolated from the plasma sample from the subject.