

# Staying positive while overcoming challenges

LOCAL FAMILY SERVED BY YOURCARE HEALTH PLAN SHARES THEIR STORY:

Few people could fault Nathan for being disheartened.

At 13, he's already experienced more than his fair share of hardships.

Diagnosed with Cystic Fibrosis – a genetic disorder that causes severe damage to the lungs and digestive system – at a young age, Nathan learned recently he will need a liver transplant. Then, during pre-operation procedures came more bad news: Nathan learned he would first need open-heart surgery.



At this point, feeling downtrodden would be completely understandable, but Nathan refuses to be anything less than positive. Instead, he leans on his family, his faith and the care he's received to always put his best foot forward.

"It's important to always stay positive and have faith," Nathan says. "That's what gets me through the toughest days, and I hope I can teach others to do the same."



It has been anything but an easy (or short) road for Nathan, as he and his family have moved back and forth between Virginia and Buffalo several times before deciding to stay in Western New York. One reason they decided to stay—the excellent health care available in the Buffalo area and

the support they've received from [YourCare Health Plan](#).

Nathan's mother, Rema, says that her family has had amazing care at the CF Lung Center at Women & Children's Hospital of Buffalo. Rema says much credit goes to their [case manager at YourCare Health Plan](#), Nina Randazza, RN BSN, CCM, whose tireless work has made the process much easier to handle. She says Nina is always on top of everything, going above and beyond their expectations. Among the support Nina and the YourCare team has provided,



Rema was encouraged to connect with [CompassionNet](#), a pediatric palliative care program that aims to address the emotional, physical and spiritual needs of families caring for children with life-threatening illnesses. CompassionNet has helped Rema manage and overcome the challenges she and Nathan have faced as they've confronted his health issues. She also is a part of the [Family Advisory Council at Women's and Children's Hospitals of Buffalo](#), representing Cystic Fibrosis patients and their families.

Meanwhile, Rema has had to put her home-based business on hold while caring for her son. It was a dream of hers to open [Certainly Sweet Candy Buffet](#), and while she does take orders from time to time, she admits she's just can't give it the attention it needs. Rema donates a portion of each service to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

Although disappointed, Rema follows her son's lead and is grateful to do what she can to give back. Rema says her family is very active in supporting Cystic Fibrosis research, raising more than \$15,000 every year for the past 10 years through the Great Strides Walk/Run in Buffalo. This year, [the event will be held May 22](#) at Island Park in Amherst.

Nathan knows there are more challenges to come. Still, he finds comfort and confidence in the loving support of those around him. With his mother by his side and people like Nina and the team at YourCare behind him, Nathan also knows he won't do any of it alone.

