

Medical Student Has Simple Christmas Wish: To Live

Reporting [Ileana Varela](#)
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MIAMI (CBS4) — Sitting in his hospital bed—his head shaven by the effects of chemotherapy—Dario Martinez has a simple wish for Christmas: He wants to live.



Dario Martinez is held by his wife, Kirenia Yrma, at Memorial Hospital West. Martinez, a 31-year-old medical student, is suffering from a rare form of leukemia. He has a young child and a pregnant wife.

He wants to live to see his 10-month-old son Daniel grow up to be a big boy. He wants to grow old next to his wife Kirenia, and he wants to be there when their daughter is born in May.

"I have so many reasons to live for," said Martinez. "I have so many reasons, I have a beautiful family, beautiful parents, the most beautiful parents in the world."

Dario, who is 31, was in his last year of medical school in New Jersey when he started feeling weird a couple of months ago, and tests confirmed he has acute lymphocytic leukemia, a type of cancer of the blood and bone marrow. His doctor says without an allogeneic bone marrow transplant Dario has no chance of survival.

The nearest hospital facility to perform the procedure is in Tampa, but it costs \$250 thousand. Martinez's insurance has already maxed out.

Fortunately, Memorial West Hospital is allowing him to stay, although his bill here already tops \$600 thousand, and he cannot pay.

"It's really hard when you don't have the resources, and when things like that happen, money interferes with possible outcomes," he said.

Just to kick start the transplant process and begin looking for a donor, the Tampa hospital requires a \$100 thousand dollar deposit. Martinez has applied for Medicaid but says he has encountered some problems because he is a Cuban exile who has been a resident for less than five years and doesn't automatically qualify.

His wife Kirenia says the wait is extremely difficult, because time is of the essence.

Right now Martinez is in remission but very weak. If the disease comes back, his odds of getting a transplant and survival greatly diminish.

"I'm just waiting for a miracle, that is a miracle of life."

If you'd like to help Dario Martinez get this life saving operation, call
Neighbors4Neighbors AT 305-597-4404.

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