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Guardian Angel

Three years ago, Heather was diagnosed with a rare kidney disease. She was administered steroids to help treat the symptoms of the disease, but it made her much sicker, and she wound up in the emergency room. That is where she met Guardian Nurse Stephanie.

“She came to my bedside and told me who she was and what she would do for me. She said she would be there to make sure I got the best care possible,” described Heather who said she didn’t even know the Guardian Nurses existed prior to this. “At first, I was like - who are

you, I don’t feel good, I don’t want to deal with new people - but she made it so easy to talk to her and I felt comfortable. She was a guardian angel.”

The doctor wanted to put Heather on dialysis, but she was unhappy with that plan. “I was freaking out, I wanted to explore other options. Stephanie talked to the doctor about it to see what the best option would be and we worked together to find a solution. If it wasn’t for her advocating for me, I would have been put on dialysis.”

Heather tried a type of chemotherapy treatment, but it didn’t work, and they scheduled her to get a dialysis port. “Stephanie contacted the doctors for me and when an issue came up with my blood counts, she was the one who figured out that they were reading the wrong numbers. She helped get everything situated.”

The day of the surgery, the doctor found something else that changed her life. “They said, ‘you can’t do the surgery today – you are pregnant!’ I couldn’t believe it. Through all of the chemo and everything, I was somehow able to get pregnant. They thought it wasn’t possible,” said Heather who struggled with fertility issues due to her medical history.

One evening, Heather began experiencing abdominal pains. By morning, the pain was worse, so she texted Stephanie who told her to go to the emergency room. “It turned out Heather was dilated without even realizing,” said Heather’s husband, Robert. “Before we knew it, Steff (Stephanie) was at Heather’s bedside assisting the attending nurses in getting Heather comfortable for the delivery. That is when I truly knew she would go above and beyond for her patients,” he remarked.

Through a life-altering disease, an unexpected pregnancy, and a new baby, Stephanie has been with Heather every step of the way. “I don’t think that I would be able to handle a lot of this stuff without her, not just for all the medical support, emotionally too, because she has been such a blessing,” said Heather who remains on dialysis and is waiting for a kidney transplant.

Robert added, “We are forever grateful for the services that the Guardian Nurses program provides and pray that it continues with unmeasurable success so many more lives can be touched as ours have been.”