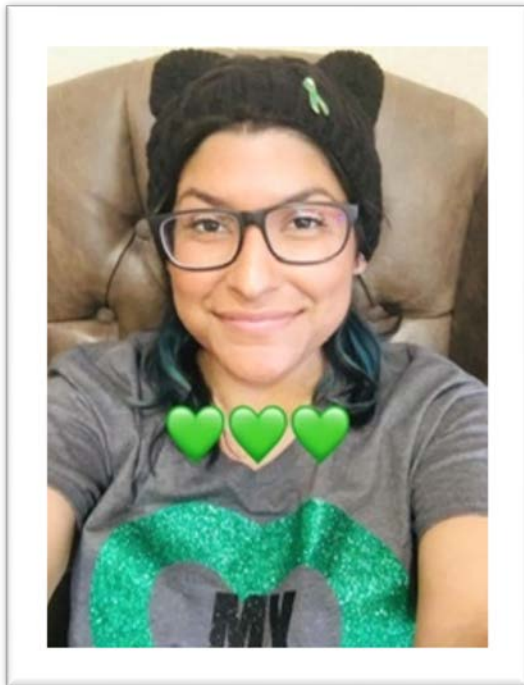




angel TREE MISSION

The Castillo Family

Battling: 27-year-old, Danielle



Danielle and her husband, Eric, age-29, have two beautiful children who are the light of their lives. Addy is five and four-year-old EJ, who is autistic. Danielle and Eric wouldn't change anything about their family for the world!

Danielle was diagnosed with Stage 3 Intrahepatic Cholangiocarcinoma (Liver Cancer) at the age of 24. She is now 27 years old and it has been three years since her original diagnosis. During those three years Danielle faced aggressive chemo, radiation, many hospital stays, blood transfusions, meds, and shots. At first, things went well; she went into remission. Just two months after her celebration of remission, the cancer came back.

Since then, her journey has been brutal. Everything seemed to be going well until this past September when her CT Scan showed her cancer progressed to Stage 4 and has aggressively metastasized into her lungs and, most recently, her brain. This came as a shock to Danielle because they thought her chemo was working. One day in October, not long after learning about her brain tumors, her sister found her unconscious. Danielle learned she is now experiencing Grand Mal Seizures in addition to trying to survive cancer.

She had to immediately endure brain surgery that removed two large tumors. After brain surgery, cancer spots remained. Danielle then underwent Gamma Knife Radiation, which is intense radiation that requires a frame to be fastened to the skull with pins that are bolted in four spots around the head, to ensure accuracy and precision of the lasers. (Yes, you read that right! A device drilled through her skull to be

connected to a machine so she cannot move during the procedure, which she was awake for!) Even after brain surgery, procedures, and cancer treatments, Danielle is still prone to seizures, and the cancer is still rampant.

Her cancer is rare, and survival is just as rare, so she has been left with little hope. Her journey is far from over, and with everything they've tried so far, the doctors are running out of ideas. Throughout everything, she has also suffered from a blood infection and pancreatitis. Her liver has not gotten better as it is producing too much bilirubin. She has had tubes put in the liver to help drain the bilirubin to reduce her levels so she can qualify for a clinical trial for another treatment. She currently has no other option.

At her first diagnosis three years ago, she didn't have insurance and had a lot of debt from life in general. Going through all of the treatments, trials, chemo, surgeries, trips to the ER, and all of the miscellaneous Doctor appointments, the enormous financial stress is like a dark cloud and is very disheartening.

Could you imagine going through all of this and being a mom too?!?

"We hope one day, by the grace and mercy of God, I will be healed. But until then, I will continue to fight the good fight until He calls me home." – Danielle Castillo

This year we join to help this family have a wonderful Christmas!