

## Payvand's Iran News ...

11/15/08

### Iranian Boy Recovers from Successful Heart Surgery in U.S.

By Grace Nasri, [Iran Times](#)

A six-year-old Iranian boy with a life threatening heart defect has undergone successful open-heart surgery in Minnesota and is expected to make a full recovery.

Ali, whose family asked that his real name not be published, suffered from a cardiac condition that affected the way his heart pumped blood. Doctors said that without surgery there was a high likelihood his life would be cut short.

With the sponsorship of The Foundation For the Children of Iran, Ali and his mother flew from their home in Iran to Minnesota, where Ali underwent a successful surgery at the Children's Hospital October 20; he was released from the hospital four days later.

"Ali is doing extremely well. He is recovering quickly at the home of a host, one of our many generous volunteers," Michelle Klein, the Project Director for The Foundation For the Children of Iran, told the *Iran Times*.

Sooki Jalali, who hosted Ali's mother while she waited for her son to undergo surgery, said she did it for the children. "Love for children and giving opportunity if it is available. Why not connect them? Those are my thoughts."

The Foundation For the Children of Iran said Ali was born with a congenital heart condition and required treatment not available to him in Iran. "Our buoyant young man came through the procedure with very high marks—and high hopes—and is recovering with great speed," it said.

Each year, the Foundation works to bring Iranian children with life threatening diseases to the Children's Hospital in Minnesota. In this case, donations paid for Ali and his mother to travel to the United States. Dr. David Gremmels, a pediatric cardiologist, and Dr. David Overman, a cardiothoracic surgeon, both with The Children's Heart Clinic, performed the surgery without compensation.

Klein told the *Iran Times*, "I like to think of these doctors as rock stars in scrubs. Without them, this story would not be possible—nor the work we do attainable."

Thanking everyone who made the operation possible, Ali's mother said, "My feelings, I want to kiss their hands. And I can't express with a word how I feel about them."

Foundation Director Nazie Eftekhari told the *Iran Times*, "As always, it takes many kind hearts to heal one broken one. In this case we were blessed with the gracious and tenacious goodness of a group of our compatriots in the UAE led by an extraordinary friend of the foundation who inspired and organized a group to care for the patient [Ali]; as though that was not enough, he paid for everything—flights, food, hotel, everything! So for the first time, our patient and his mother were not alone to fend for themselves in Dubai and get through the visa process."

Eftekhari said, "As for the doctors and nurses, well, what can I say? They truly are the very best of America—the very best. They don't care what the state of relations may be between the government of Iran and the government of the United States. They recognize matters of state should not interfere with matters of the heart. They know governments come and go, but the bonds of humanity are ever enduring. They believe as I do—as we all do—the heart you heal can never, never, harbor ill will against

its saviors and will never raise its voice with the ugly chant, 'Down with America!'"

The Foundation for the Children of Iran helps about two Iranian children a year.

**About Iran Times:** *The Iran Times is an independent newspaper with no affiliation with any political party or faction The Iran Times corporation was founded in Washington D.C. in 1970, in accordance with U.S. federal and local regulations: [www.iran-times.com](http://www.iran-times.com)*

... Payvand News - 11/15/08 ...