

Many faces, one heart

- ✓ Student
- ✓ Nurse
- ✓ Bass Player
- ✓ Dietician
- ✓ Advocate
- ✓ **Rare Disease Patient**

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FH Europe
The European FH Patient Network

RARE DISEASE DAY®

A young man, with many faces and one heart. Meet Thanos!

Athanasios Pallidis, better known as Thanos, was born in 1990 in Greece. Thanos was diagnosed with Homozygous Familial Hypercholesterolemia (HoFH) at the age of four (4). HoFH is a rare form of Familial Hypercholesterolemia (FH). It is an inherited condition, where a false gene, inherited from both parents with FH, causes dangerously high cholesterol. This in turn leads to premature atherosclerosis, cardiovascular disease at an early age. Undetected and untreated manifests itself through premature heart attack(s), stroke and even death.

Soon after his diagnosis, Thanos was put on a combination of lipid lowering drugs, followed by an LDL apheresis*, the only available and lifesaving treatment at the time. Hear Thanos explain [the treatment and the emotional toll](#) it takes on patients, already at an early age. [You can hear Thanos share more about his life with HoFH here.](#)

In 2013, a Greek FH patient association was founded. Thanos was one of the founding members, and the Vice-President of the Board at the time. He contributed to raising awareness about FH among the Greek medical community and the public in general.

In 2015, he became the President of the Board for a three-year term. During his presidency, the Board successfully advocated for a ruling, whereby Homozygous FH students could enter public university based on their previous year's scores and were exempt from the obligation to take the national final exams.

Additionally, he established close ties with the Ministry of Health, to ensure that FH patients had access to proper medical treatment even during the strict austerity measures that Greece was subject to at that time.

Thanos also became one of the first Trustees of FH Europe, the European FH Patient Network. In recent years, Thanos contributed alongside other international co-authors of the “Global Call to Action on FH”. The policy document, initiated by the World Heart Federation, in collaboration with a global advocacy community, was published in Jan 2020 and aims to improve the diagnosis and treatment of FH and HoFH worldwide.

Despite his condition and a challenging on-going treatment, Thanos pursues his ambitions and passions. He has recently received a bachelor’s degree from the Department of Nursing; he is in his final year studying Nutritional Sciences and Dietetics. Outside his studies and advocating for FH and HoFH, he is an accomplished electric bass player in a heavy metal band, a pet lover, and an avid walker. There is nothing better than a philosophical discussion over a healthy meal with this incredibly humble and down-to-earth guy! He will surprise you many times over with his knowledge of ancient history and win you with his smile!

In 2020, we nominated Thanos for a prestigious [Black Pearl Award](#) by [Eurordis](#) in the Young Patient Advocate category in recognition of his work for the Greek, European and the international patient community. And guess what? [He got all the way to the final, chosen from 1720 nominations in 2021.](#)