

# My Hero

Neha Mannikar

Everyone has a hero, someone to look up to and trust. For most people, their heroes are Superman, an older relative, or a famous person. But my hero is my younger brother, Rahul. He has inspired me and supported me whenever I needed him the most.

Rahul does not look like your average hero. He was born with Arthrogyriposis. He has club feet, his hands cannot straighten, and he can't bend his knees, elbows or wrists. In an attempt to help, the doctors performed a series of surgeries. I can remember seeing him, a new cast every so often. Seeing him, crying with pain but never giving up.

Obviously, crawling wouldn't work for him. But all this didn't stop him. He finally devised a way of scooting from place to place. And he kept on trying to walk, to be like everyone else. One day he did learn to walk by holding walls, giving us the message that he can be like any other boy. As he was learning to walk, he fell and broke his ankle. Again he was put into casts. Most people would have quit then and spent their life in a wheelchair. Though the fracture terrified him, he was ready to continue learning and eventually mastered walking. He still wears braces for his legs, does exercises for his arms, and goes to therapy, but his walking has greatly improved. He always works hard and does not use his Arthrogyriposis as an excuse to not try.

Rahul taught me to never give up and to keep on striving for the best you can get. He has shown me that anything is possible. If you want to do it, you can do it. And when I feel like I can't go on, and want to just lie there, I remember my brother's battle to prove nothing is impossible. Rahul has inspired me to try and if I don't quite make it, to try again.

Heroes are not determined by muscles, super powers, or fancy capes. It is what's inside them, their courage, bravery, and determination, that makes them who they are.