

Brandon Shackelford

\$5,000 WINNER

**Walmart Customer
Hampton, VA**

I had stage 2 colon cancer in 2017 and 20% of my colon was cut out. I've been in remission for five years, but I've struggled with being consistent when it comes to eating right and working out. I was always snacking when I was bored, and I would get depressed at times because I didn't like the way I looked. It would cause me to think negatively and be unpleasant to be around.

I found out about the Thrive Challenge from my close friend, Michael Nims.

He is a Thrive Challenge winner, and he told me about his experience. I tried the Thrive app once before and I was inconsistent with it. But once I started realizing my clothes didn't fit anymore and I was getting out of breath just by walking up one flight of stairs, I knew it was time for a change. I started to use the Thrive app again, and this time I was able to complete three 21-day Challenges.

First, I decided to stop buying processed snacks for the house.

Instead, I started meal prepping and cutting out juices and sodas. When I want something sweet, I'll make a fruit smoothie. My favorite is a peanut butter and banana smoothie with vanilla almond milk. I used to eat until I was so full that I didn't want to move. Now, I've noticed that by choosing more veggies and whole foods, I feel better and my skin even looks better.

I started working out with a trainer.

The first month was tough to stay motivated, especially after a long day of work. There were times I didn't feel like going, but my wife, Margueret, was there to push me and tell me not to give up. Now, seeing how much better my body feels from moving has become addicting! My goal is to get under 300 pounds again. My clothes are fitting better now, and people who I don't see regularly stop and ask me, "Are you losing weight?"



Margueret has cut soda out of her diet too, and we even work out together and go on walks.

We are cooking more and having date nights. We like making baked chicken wings with sautéed zucchini and squash. We're also saving almost \$400 a month by buying in bulk and cooking more at home. I'd love to save up to put a down payment on a house so we can start a family.

I've been putting my phone on Sleep mode at 9:00 p.m., and then Do Not Disturb mode at 10:00 p.m.

My wife and I use that extra hour to enjoy each other's company, and now I'm getting at least seven hours of sleep. I don't feel sluggish in the morning anymore and I don't doze off at work. When I wake up, I meditate for ten minutes. It helps me navigate through my day.

Being a cancer survivor, I feel like I have a new chance to take advantage of my health and be around my family for a long time.

The Thrive Challenge has been like a journal for me. It's given me a new way to look at life and it has made me appreciate my health more. It is helping me become a better husband, brother, uncle, and son — and have a chance to be around much longer.



THRIVE