

Health

A thinner Marie Osmond can laugh about it now

'Dancing' helped her leap ahead

By Nanci Hellmich
USA TODAY

Entertainer Marie Osmond, 49, says that after she lost 45 pounds, her 19-year-old daughter, Rachael, revamped her wardrobe.

"She went into my closet and threw everything away and said, 'I'm dressing you now because you are hot, and then I can borrow your clothes,'" Osmond says. "She said: 'No more long jackets, no more full skirts. You don't need to hide anything now. You just need to hide your credit card from me.'"

The singer dropped from a size 12/14 to a size 2/4 in four months in late 2007 and has kept the weight off since then. "When you think about 45 pounds, that's like carrying around a small preschooler," she says. "Trust me, it wears out your knees."

She shares her diet story and other vignettes from her life in *Might As Well Laugh About It Now*.

At 5-foot-5, she weighs about 120 pounds and is a spokeswoman for NutriSystem, the portion-controlled, packaged diet program (about 1,200 calories a day) she follows to this day.

Osmond, the divorced mother of eight children ages 6 to 26, says she decided to trim down for her health's sake. Both sides of her family have a history of heart disease, and her late mother en-



By Kevin Kolczynski, Universal Orlando, via AP

April 2007: Marie Osmond as she appeared after her divorce and before her weight loss.



By Louise Traub, AP

April 2009: Donnie and Marie Osmond dance as part of their Flamingo Hotel show in Las Vegas.

Excerpt

To start off, I'd take brisk walks with the kids, which had a double benefit. Of course it was aerobic, and without the distraction of video games and cell phones and TV, it was also a great way to really get to hear about what was going on in their lives. One of my favorite activities is reading, but I had to find a way to make it active. So instead of sitting on the couch, I bought an iPod and began to download audio books to listen to as I walked while the kids were in school.



From *Might As Well Laugh About It Now* by Marie Osmond with Marcia Wilkie

couraged her to start taking better care of herself, as did her oldest son, Stephen.

Stephen said to her, "Mom, we think you're beautiful no matter what you weigh, but we want you to start taking care of yourself. . . . We want you to be around for us and for our kids, too."

Those conversations persuaded her to sign up for the diet program and begin a walking program. After she had lost about 6 pounds, she started working out for *Dancing With the Stars*, and the rest came off quickly.

Osmond says that when she was heavier, she put everyone else's needs before her own. She used to "skip breakfast and blow through lunch, and then I'd eat a big meal or grab a bag of chips."

Now she eats three meals and a couple of snacks a day. Besides the diet program's food, she has salads and fruit. "I freeze grapes. It's like eating sherbet."

Her kids are eating better now

that she has lost weight, she says.

Osmond occasionally indulges in her favorite treat: vanilla ice cream. She eats NutriSystem's vanilla ice cream sandwiches, and "every now and then, I have to have Häagen Dazs."

She stays in shape by walking or working out on the elliptical and lifting weights. She also does a dance competition with her brother Donny in their show at the Flamingo Hotel in Las Vegas. The audience votes on which of the sibling duo is the best. "Donny loses every night," she says with a laugh. "Donny is in fantastic shape, but I'm still the better dancer. I told him when he can wear 4-inch heels and kick his leg overhead, he'll be the winner."

Next on her list of things to do: She's finishing an inspirational album, and she's hosting a syndicated talk show starting this fall called *Marie*.

And daughter Rachael is going to handle her clothes for the show.

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