



'The Songstress' Conquers Yo-Yo Weight Gain And Finds Her Sleeker Self

Never Too Late

"I have nothing to complain about. Look at my life!"

by aisha i. jefferson

"I'll never be skinny. It's just not gonna happen," **Marsha Ambrosius** says. But after shedding 70 pounds, some may argue that the 5-foot-8-inch singer and songwriter already is.

Like her newly svelte J Records label mate Jennifer Hudson, Ambrosius, who rose to fame as half of the British neo-soul duo Floetry, relied on Weight Watchers to slim down from a size 16 to a size 6. She showcased her new look just in time for the release earlier this year of her first solo album, "Late Nights and Early Mornings."

Although she's never felt record industry pressure to be smaller, the former high school basketball star realized she wasn't totally comfortable with herself and embarked on a weight-loss plan. Ambrosius' weight had been yo-yoing for the past decade, surprising many people familiar with her athletic history. The 33-year-old committed to a plan in April 2009.

And she says it's been fairly easy. "Once I found the things that work for me it's been great," she says.

Instead of employing a "luxurious personal chef," Ambrosius finds recipes online and employs clever ways to prepare her favorite dishes. "I kind of take anything that I want and make the low-fat version of it," she says, explaining that she'd prepare French fries by baking sweet potatoes instead of frying white potatoes. She also nixed sugar, white bread and beef from her diet.

She didn't hire a pricey celebrity fitness trainer, either. Ambrosius spends 40 minutes three times a week dancing to '80s and '90s hits like "Pump Up the Jam" and "U Can't Touch This" courtesy of her "Just Dance" game on Nintendo Wii.

"I didn't have a personal trainer. I had a Nintendo Wii Fit ... and my determination," Ambrosius says. As a downtown Philadelphia resident, she also gets exercises from walking everywhere.

Ambrosius loves her new size and her new wardrobe options, but her mind hasn't caught up with her slimmer body. "In my brain, I'm still, like, 'I can't wear that.' It's weird," she says. Fortunately for her, she has the assistance of stylists who help her find sexy looks that compliment her curves. "I have nothing to complain about. Look at my life!" ♥