Healthy Vegetarian

Benefits
High in Carbohydrates - the primary source of energy for the body
Lower Risk - heart disease, diabetes, and some cancers
Weight Management - easy to maintain a healthy weight

Things to Watch
Calorie Intake - Vegetarians, especially vegans, can struggle getting enough calories in their daily meals.

Protein Intake - Without meat, or in some cases animal protein, it can be a challenge to get enough protein to support muscle growth and repair

Nutrients - Make sure you are getting enough calcium, iron, zinc, riboflavin, B-12, vitamin D, and omega 3-s in your diet.

Faux Proteins - Faux meats are very processed refined foods that deplete nutrients

Helpful Hints
Easy to get protein - combine WHOLE grains and beans
ex. Hummus and pita or black beans on a tortilla

Find High Quality Source of Fat - nuts, seeds, and small portions of full fat dairy like whole milk yogurt (if diet allows)

Protein through variety - do not rely on one thing, like cheese, for your protein (use beans/legumes, lentils, tofu, nuts, dairy

Enough Calories - eat energy-dense foods, double-portion size on favorite foods, add in extra snacks, and a lot of variety

Nutrients - Read "The Healthy Vegetarian Athlete" article to find. suggestions of foods that give you the nutrients you need as an athlete. The power point "The Athlete and Vegetarian Eating" provides you with the levels of these nutrients you need.