



**Rafael Ramos Vecchio, MD**  
Plastic & Reconstructive Surgeon

220 Alhambra Circle, First Floor, Coral Gables, FL 33134

☎ (305) 960-7511 ✉ [rmos@careagaplasticsurgery.com](mailto:rmos@careagaplasticsurgery.com) 📷 Instagram: drrafamos

## **Facelift – Postoperative Instructions**

Thank you for trusting Careaga Plastic Surgery with your facelift procedure. These guidelines will help you recover safely and achieve the best possible results. Please review them carefully and contact our office with any questions or concerns.

### **Medications You Must Take**

1. Vaseline – when replacing your compressive garment, apply thinly to incision lines twice daily for the first week to keep them moist and promote healing.

### **Medications You Can Take if Needed**

1. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) – for mild to moderate pain. Avoid aspirin, ibuprofen, or other NSAIDs for 2 weeks.
2. Hydrocodone or Tylenol #3 – you may have received a second line medication for pain, take only as needed every 6 hours.
  - Take this medication with a stool softener as it will constipate you.
  - It can be taken with the Tylenol, but if pain is controlled, it is best to just take Tylenol instead.
3. Ondansetron (Zofran) – for nausea, if prescribed.
4. Stool softener – if using prescription pain medication, take a stool softener daily to avoid constipation.

### **The Night of Your Surgery**

- Keep your head elevated at 30–45° using pillows or a recliner. This helps minimize swelling and bruising.
- Leave your surgical dressings intact overnight unless instructed otherwise.
- Do not apply ice directly to the face.
- Mild oozing or drainage from the incision sites is normal for the first 24–48 hours.
- Drink plenty of water and eat soft, low-sodium foods. Avoid alcohol and caffeine.

### **The Morning After Surgery and the First Week**

- Continue sleeping with your head elevated for at least 2 weeks to reduce swelling.



**Rafael Ramos Vecchio, MD**  
Plastic & Reconstructive Surgeon

220 Alhambra Circle, First Floor, Coral Gables, FL 33134

☎ (305) 960-7511 ✉ [rramos@careagaplasticsurgery.com](mailto:rramos@careagaplasticsurgery.com) 📷 Instagram: drrafamos

- If you have drains, record the output twice daily and **bring your log to your follow-up appointment**. This log info will be used to remove the drain
- You may shower from the neck down the day after surgery. Wash your hair gently after 48 hours using baby shampoo, with assistance if possible.
- After the compressive wrap has been removed, reapply ointment to incision lines twice daily after gentle cleansing, then wear face garment at all times.
- Expect bruising, tightness, and numbness, especially around the ears and cheeks—these are normal and will gradually improve.
- Avoid bending forward, heavy lifting, or vigorous activity.

### **Activity Guidelines**

- Avoid lifting more than 10 lb (4.5 kg) or engaging in strenuous exercise for 3 weeks.
- Avoid smoking or vaping—it delays healing and increases the risk of complications.
- You may begin light walking at 2 weeks and gentle exercise after 4 weeks, pending clearance from Dr. Ramos.
- Do not use saunas, steam rooms, or hot tubs for 6 weeks.
- Avoid direct sunlight on your face and incisions for at least 3 months.

### **Scar and Skin Care**

- Keep incision lines clean and moisturized with ointment for the first week.
- Begin using a silicone-based scar cream at 2 weeks if approved.
- Use sunscreen SPF 50 daily once incisions are closed to prevent pigmentation changes.
- Swelling, lumpiness and firmness will continue to soften over 6–8 weeks; final results may take several months.
- After 2 weeks, you can wear the compressive garment only to sleep for the first month after surgery. Then only use it if you notice swelling in the mornings.
- Lymphatic drainage massages can help with swelling. If interested, this can be provided at our practice. Reach out to schedule.



**Rafael Ramos Vecchio, MD**

Plastic & Reconstructive Surgeon

220 Alhambra Circle, First Floor, Coral Gables, FL 33134

☎ (305) 960-7511 ✉ [rmos@careagaplasticsurgery.com](mailto:rmos@careagaplasticsurgery.com) 📷 Instagram: drrafamos

**Follow-Up Visits**

- First visit: 1–2 days after surgery to remove or empty drains.
- Second visit: 7 days post-op for suture removal.
- Additional visits: at 2 weeks, 6 weeks, 3 months, and 6 months as directed.

**When to Call the Office**

Contact us immediately if you experience:

- Sudden swelling or pain on one side,
- Persistent bleeding,
- Fever over 101°F (38.3°C),
- Foul-smelling drainage,
- Skin discoloration or blistering, or
- Shortness of breath or chest pain.

If urgent symptoms occur after hours, go to the nearest emergency room.