

The lumbar support illusion

Lumbar support has for the last 30-40 years been the magic formula for a good sitting position. It has been accepted by all - but the effect has never been controlled by anyone. We are, after all, supposed to be scientists and not magicians.

Only in the reclined position will the support have any effect. But most forms of active work take place in the forward bent position. To obtain a more effective lumbar support the seat has to slope backwards and the chair must be low to avoid pressure under the knees. In this way people have to bend and strain their backs more than ever before to reach the table.

The illusion of lumbar support has resulted in furniture unsuitable for the normal bent over working position. Thus the lumbar support theory is probably the main reason for the rapidly growing number of back-sufferers.

From: A.C. Mandal, The Seated Man (p 88)