

# Ergonomics

FOR STATE AGENCY AND PUBLIC UNIVERSITY OFFICE ERGONOMIC ASSESSORS

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[saif.com](http://saif.com)

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This month, we wanted to share information on lumbar support from Bob Button, founder of Safety In Motion® (SIM). (You may recall that green, yellow, and red zones are the building blocks of the SIM principles.) Last year, SIM released SIM-plicity™ Office, a training module designed for those of us who work primarily in an office environment. Many of you are certified to deliver SIM training, but we are always looking for additional trainers. If you'd like to help your colleagues work more comfortably and safely, please email us at [ergocert@saif.com](mailto:ergocert@saif.com).

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## Sitting or driving and lumbar support

(Reprinted with permission from Bob Button, founder and director, Safety In Motion®.)

Every year it seems that we are sitting for longer periods of time throughout the day. There are many reasons why this is occurring. Commutes to and from work have become longer for many of us. We are using electronic devices such as computers, iPads and TV for both work and personal tasks. So how long are you sitting every day? Are you experiencing any discomfort in your back while you sit, or when you get up after sitting?

### Upcoming ergonomics assessor trainings

**Basic office ergo assessor**  
January 17, 2018 | Salem  
March 21, 2018 | Salem

For locations and to register online, visit [saif.com/training](http://saif.com/training)

### Online resources

[State of Oregon Office Ergonomic Consensus Guidelines](#)

[Oregon OSHA Ergonomics Publications](#)

[OSHA.gov Computer Workstations eTool](#)

[SAIF Safety Topics](#)

Let's take the time now to review how lumbar support can help protect the spine.

Many office chairs and vehicle seats now offer adjustable lumbar support. When adjusted correctly, these seats support your lumbar spine in a natural "in-curve." This positions your spine to distribute pressure more evenly on your spinal discs.

Many of us were taught to place lumbar support at the height of our naval. But recent advances in office ergonomics have taught us that this is too high and can actually add to discomfort in the area of your low lumbar and pelvis.

### So where should this lumbar support be placed?

Try to position lumbar support about 2 inches below the top of your pelvis. This is the height of your joint between your low lumbar and sacrum (L5-S1).

Placing the lumbar support at this height does two things:

- One, it takes direct pressure off the spine.
- Two, it helps support the pelvis and lumbar curve at the same time.

We don't think about it, but ergonomic chairs and seats are pieces of equipment that can take unnecessary force off of our spine. So, take a few minutes to adjust your lumbar support for a good fit and more comfort.



### Office ergonomics assessor worksheet

[www.saif.com/Documents/Employer/trainings/S960\\_Ergo\\_Assessment\\_ff.pdf](http://www.saif.com/Documents/Employer/trainings/S960_Ergo_Assessment_ff.pdf)