

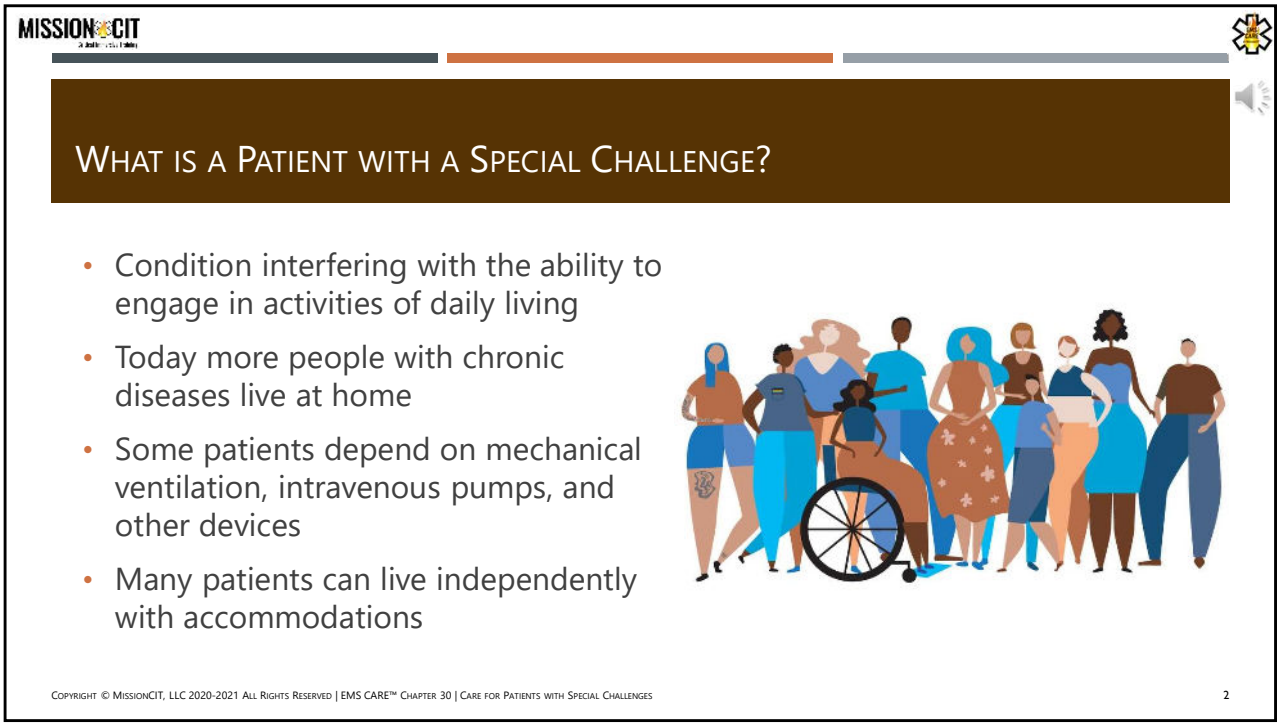
Thanks Missah. Let's begin with a brief Introduction to Patients with Special Challenges.

As we go through the chapter, we often discuss both Special Challenges and Disabilities in the same context. There may be subtle human differences between the two, but for the purposes of this chapter, consider them as the same in your patient care. But be careful not to characterize a patient's condition verbally, as it may not be the same as the patient or family perceives.

There are legal or Social Security related considerations on the definition of disabilities. That is outside the scope

of this chapter.

Finally, remember that disability may be the primary reason that EMS was contacted. And that disabilities may complicate other illnesses or injuries. Be flexible in your patient approach. For patients with special challenges, the *atypical* is often typical.



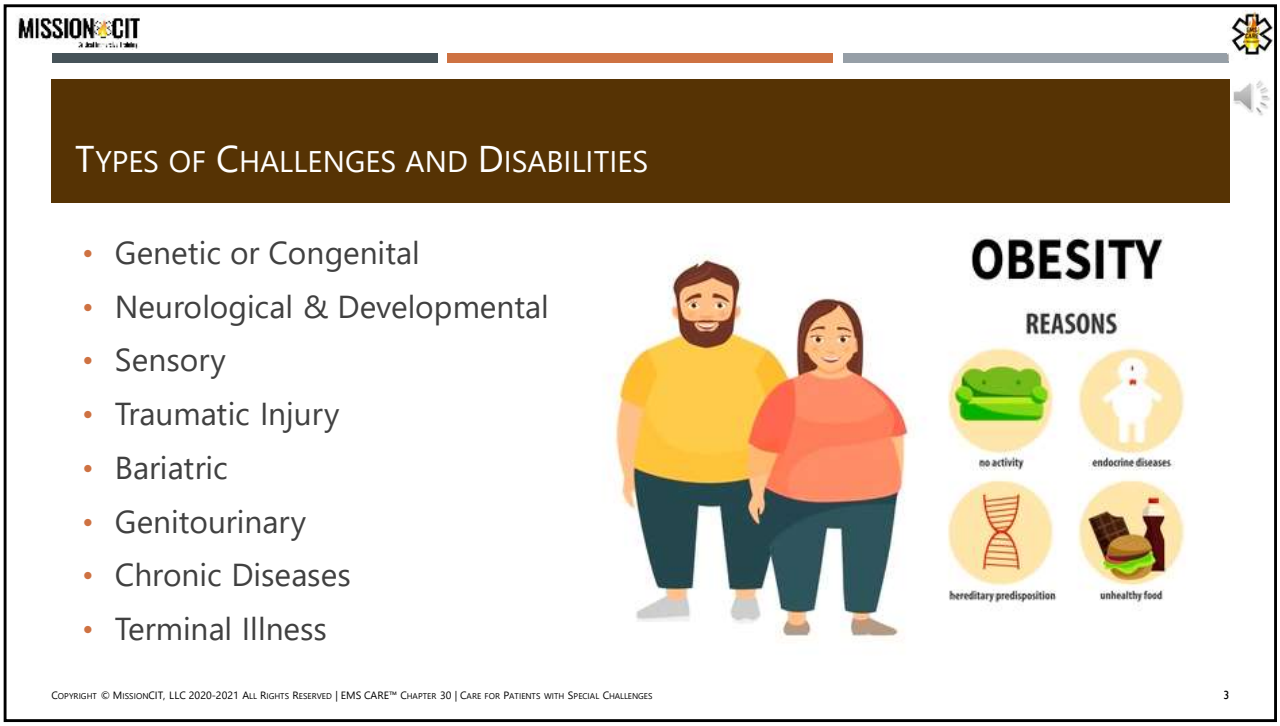
So, what defines a patient with special challenges?

The primary consideration is that that patient presents a condition interfering with the ability to engage in activities of daily living. It could be a disability, chronic disease, terminal illness or need for use of an advanced medical device.

The patient may be in a variety of living conditions, or even at work. It depends upon the severity of the disability or challenge.

It's important to recognize that today, more people with special challenges can live and work independently with

accommodations.

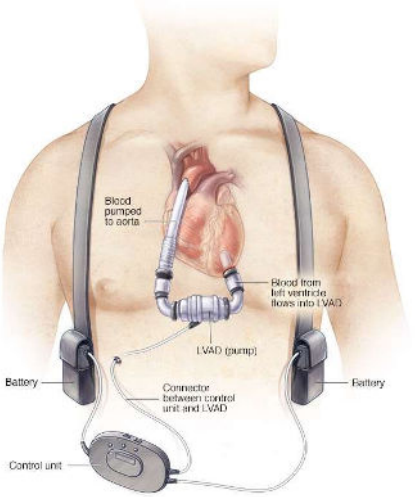


There are many types of medical challenges and disabilities that may affect a patient. These conditions may be:

- Genetic or Congenital
- Neurological & Developmental
- Sensory
- Resultant from a Traumatic Injury
- Bariatric
- Genitourinary
- A Chronic Disease, or
- A Terminal Illness.

Advanced Medical Devices

- Respiratory
- Cardiac
- Gastrourinary
- Sensory
- Neurological



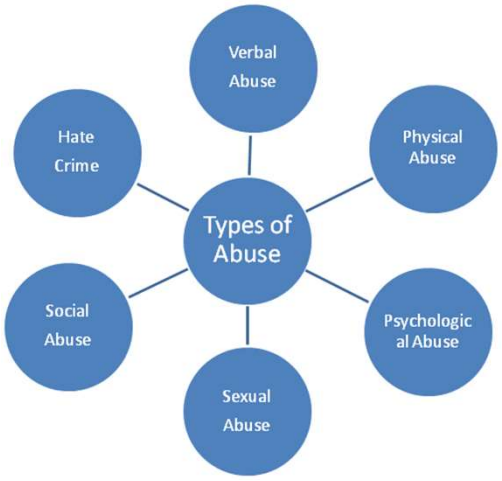
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As a result of medical conditions, the patient may be partially or fully dependent upon an advanced medical device. The EMT must be aware of the type of device and its implication to patientcare, especially when you are presented with a device malfunction that may be life-threatening.

We discuss Respiratory, Cardiac, Gastrourinary, Sensory, and Neurological devices in Chapters 5 and 6.

Environmental Challenges

- Poverty
- Homelessness
- Care facility conditions
- Abuse
- Neglect



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In addition, the patient may have medical conditions or challenges from environmental situations beyond their immediate control. We discuss in Chapter 4 patient considerations resulting from Poverty, Homelessness, Care facility conditions, Abuse, and Neglect.

Patient Assessment

- Do not be distracted by the equipment!
- Focus on the patient
- What is different about these patients?
- The same?
- How to adjust protocol to fit the patient?
- Compliance
- Medical control and ALS is your friend



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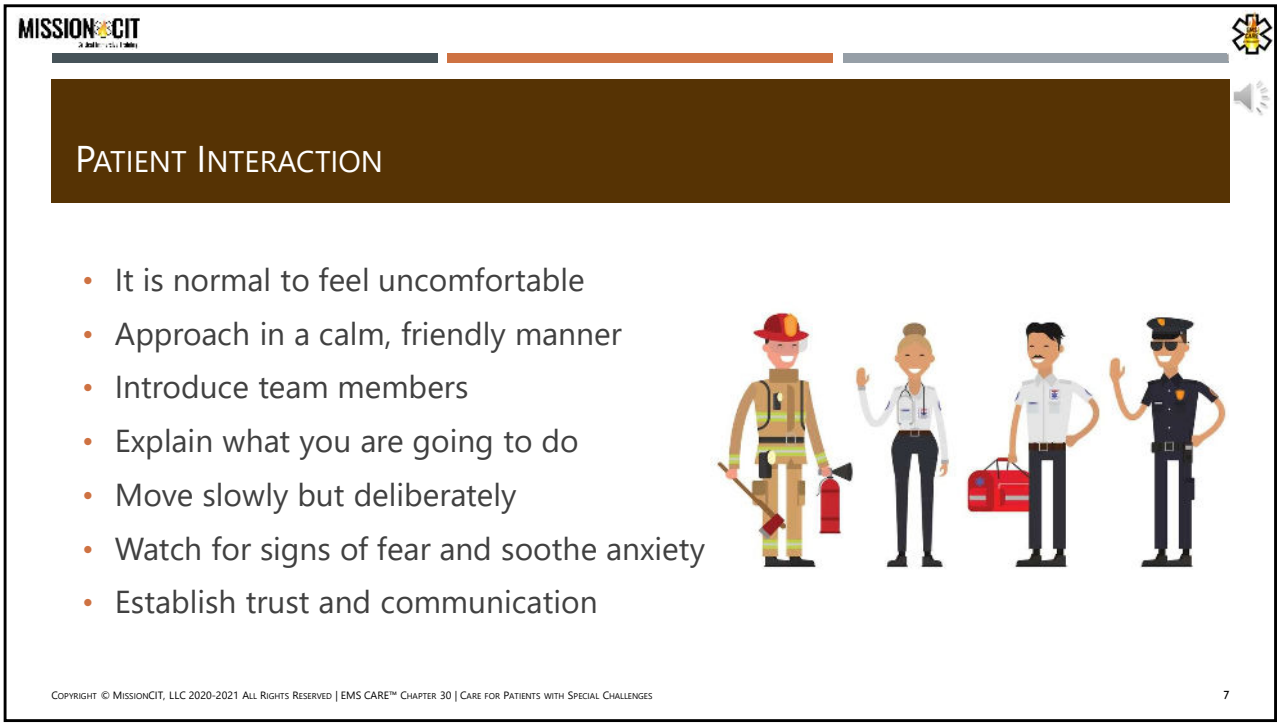
So, as you go through the course, here are some patient care circumstances to consider.

First, many situations may have intimidating equipment and devices. Most importantly, do not be distracted by the equipment, and focus on the patient.

How should you best adjust tactics to fit the patient challenges, while maintaining compliance with local protocol?

Finally, if during or after scene size-up and initial patient assessment, you are uncomfortable with the situation,

don’t hesitate to reach out to Medical Control and ALS for support.



So, as you go through the course, consider how both you and the patient react to each other. Consider

- That It is normal for an EMT to feel uncomfortable when facing unexpected or new conditions.
- Always Approach the patient in a calm, friendly manner.
- Introduce your fellow team members.
- Explain what you are going to do.
- Move slowly but deliberately.
- Watch for patient signs of fear and be prepared to soothe their anxiety, and finally

- Do your best to Establish trust with effective communication.

So, that’s the end of this introduction to Care for Patients with Special Challenges. Missah will be with you next to discuss Congenital, Neurological, and Sensory Disabilities.

Good Studying