



JOHNS HOPKINS
M E D I C I N E

Physiatric Approaches to Myositis

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Physiatry? Physiatrist?

- Pronounced fizz ee at' trist or fizz i' a trist
- NOT psychiatry!
- Same as “Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation” or PM&R
- What is physiatry then?

Physiatry

- A medical specialty (MD or DO)
- Focused on “disability” rather than disease itself
- Deals with ANY disease conditions that result in physical disability
- Population-based on specialty (such as pediatrics or emergency medicine)

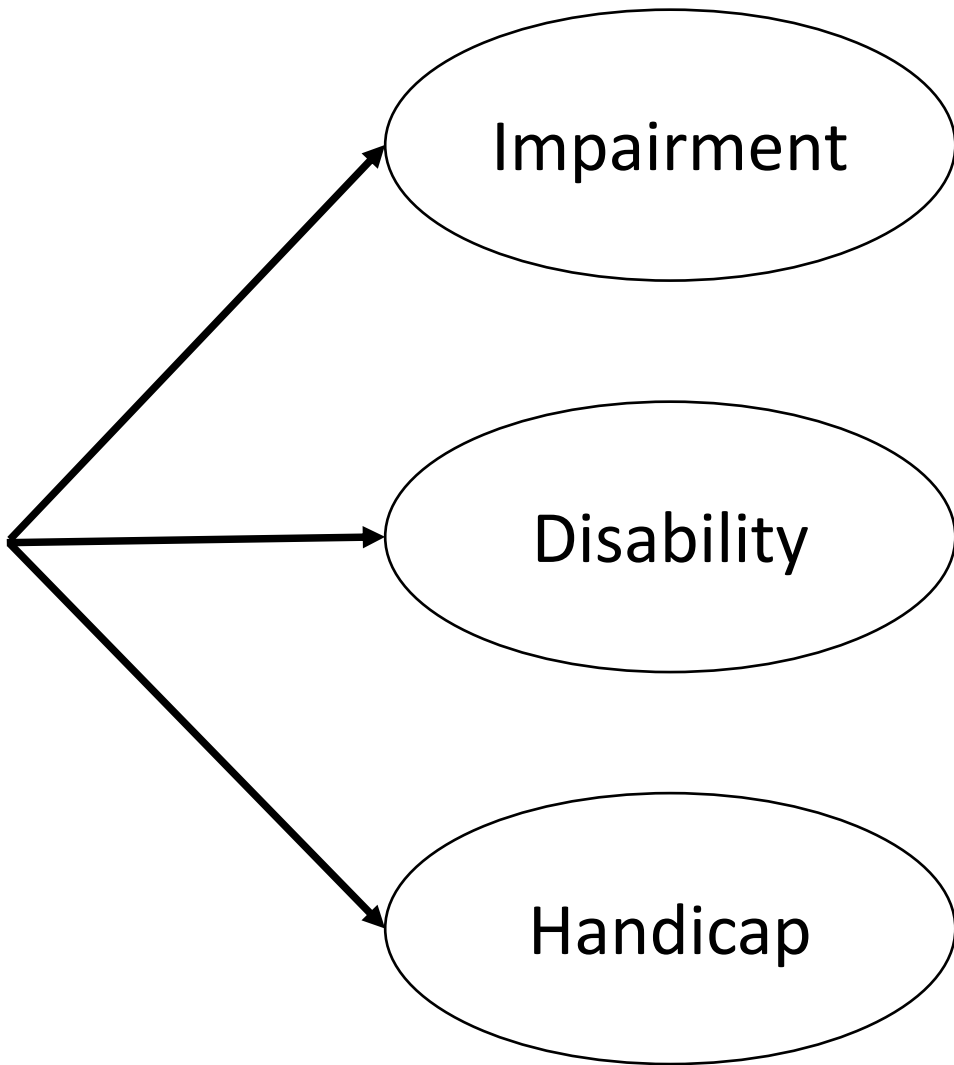
Concepts

- **IMPAIRMENT:** any loss of physiological or anatomical structure or function at the level of organ or system function.
 - Example: inflammation/degeneration of muscle, joint arthritis, etc.
- **DISABILITY:** disability is any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity or a function
 - Example: muscle weakness from myositis, difficulty walking, difficulty swallowing, etc.
- **HANDICAP:** limited social integration due to disability
 - Example: inability to access to a building with stairs, difficulty using public toilet

Impairment ≠ Disability ≠ Handicap

- Example: amyopathic dermatomyositis -> may have tissue impairment, but no disability or handicap
- Example: patient who's independent on wheelchair -> may have both impairment AND disability, but NOT handicap
- Example: patients with dwarfism -> no impairment or disability but may have handicap

Physiatrie
Approach



Myositis

Case Example

- 65 year old male
- Test results are consistent with an inclusion body myositis
- Progressive muscle weakness in upper and lower limbs
- Falls down a few times a month
- Difficulty with swallowing
- What do we do?

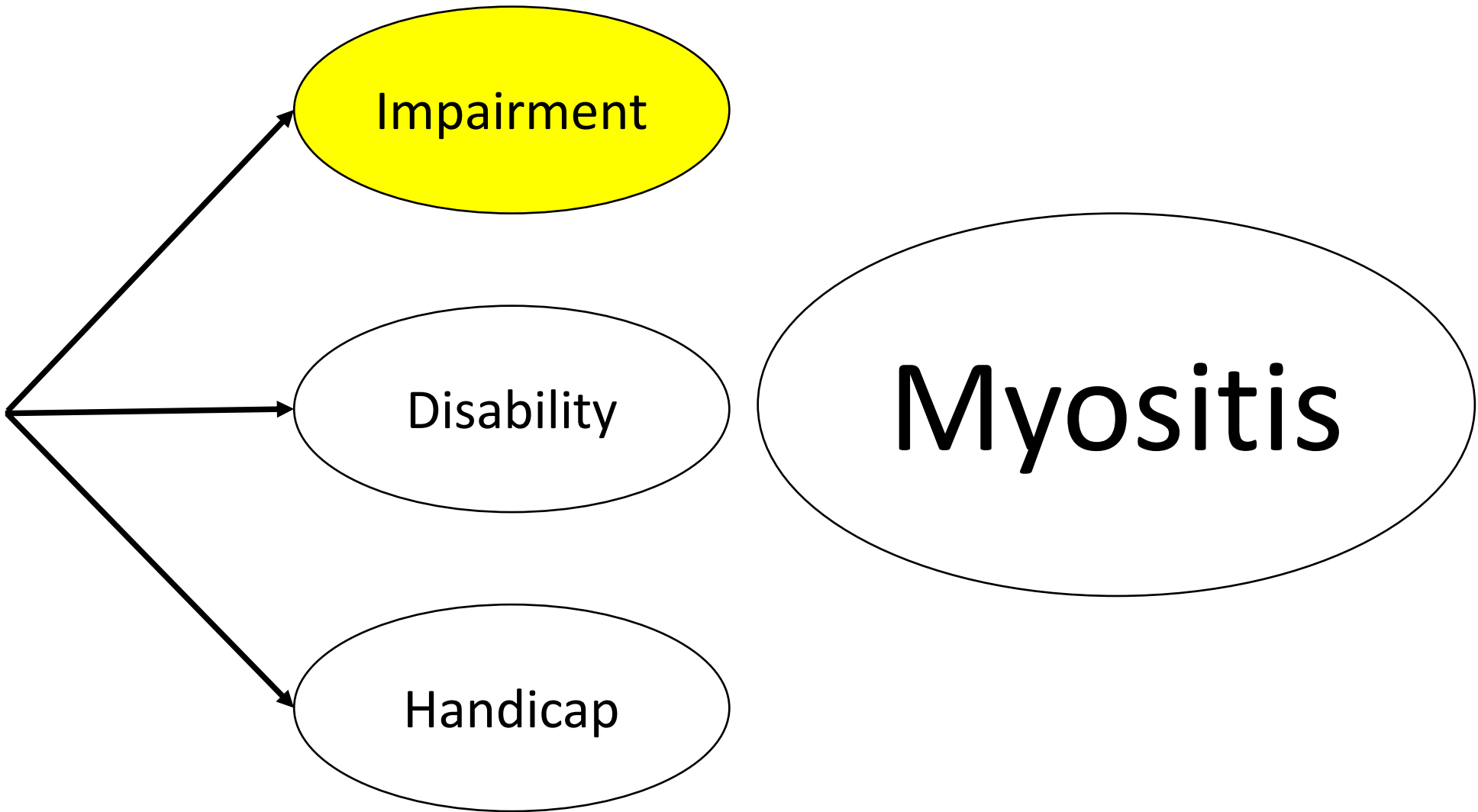
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Impairment

Disability

Handicap

Myositis



Treating Impairment

- What's the impairment? – muscle inflammation & degeneration
- Potential use of IVIG, steroids, methotrexate, etc: “medical treatment”
- Therapeutic exercise, aiming to slow down the progression

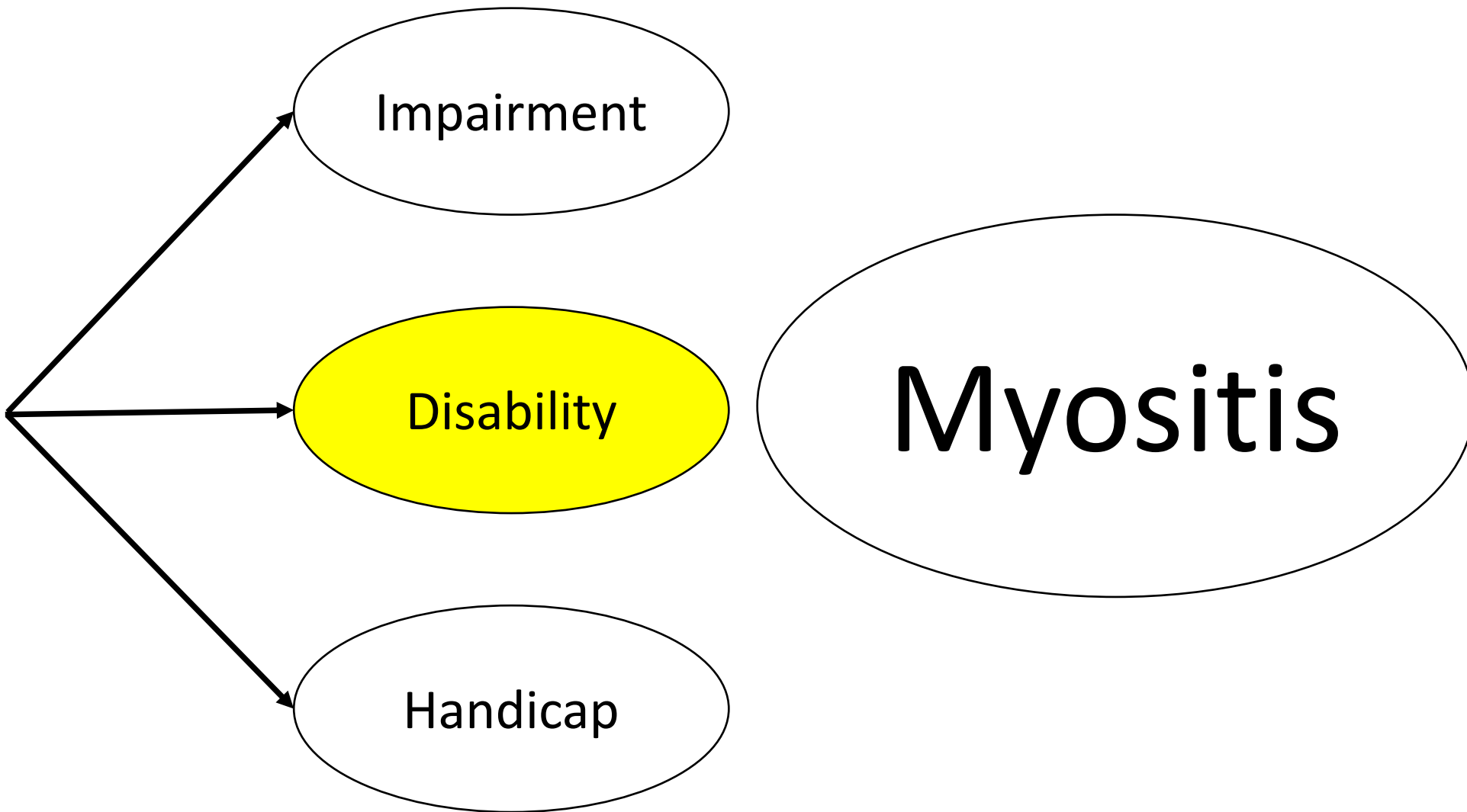
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Identifying Disability

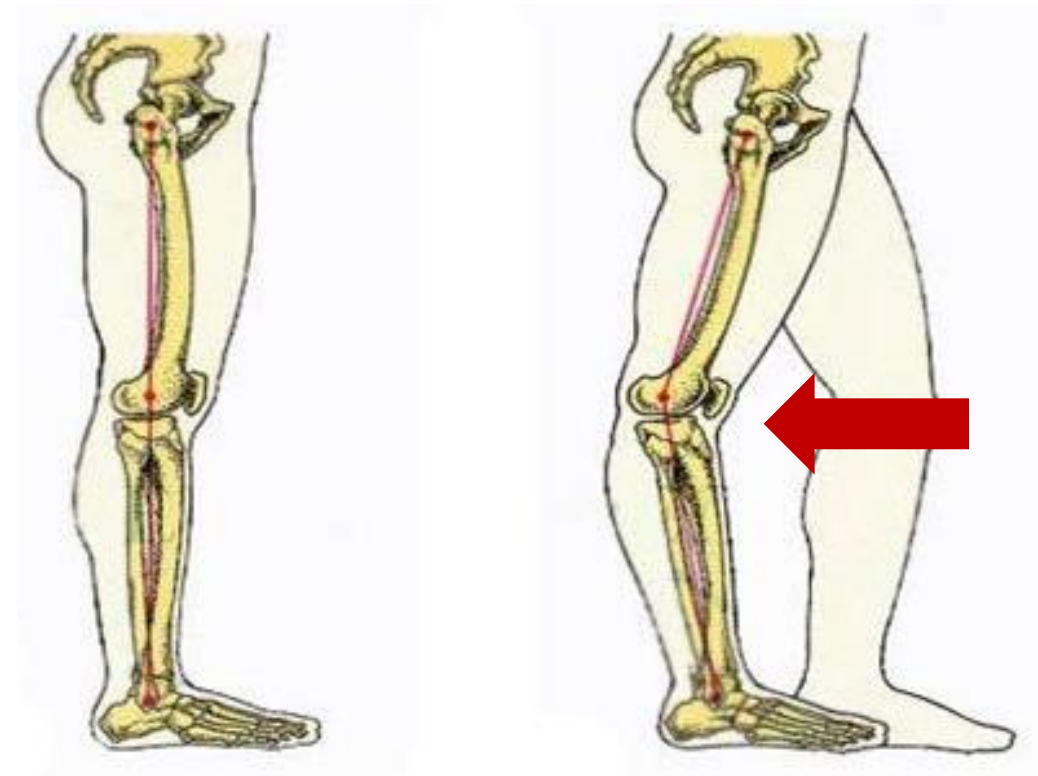
- Difficulty walking and frequent falls
- Difficulty swallowing
- Difficulty with fine motor skills: can't type, etc.
- Difficulty with heavy weight lifting, etc

Physiatrie Intervention of Gait Dysfunction

- First, identify the problem – why can't they walk? Balance? Frequent falls? Too slow?
- Second analyze gait – appropriate speed? Good turning? Avoid obstacles OK?
- Other consideration – level of activity? Do we even need to fix this problem?

Typical Gait Abnormality in IBM

- Usually “buckles” or “collapses” at the knee
- Knee hyperextension (“genu recurvatum”)
- Uneven surfaces; crowded area; long distance



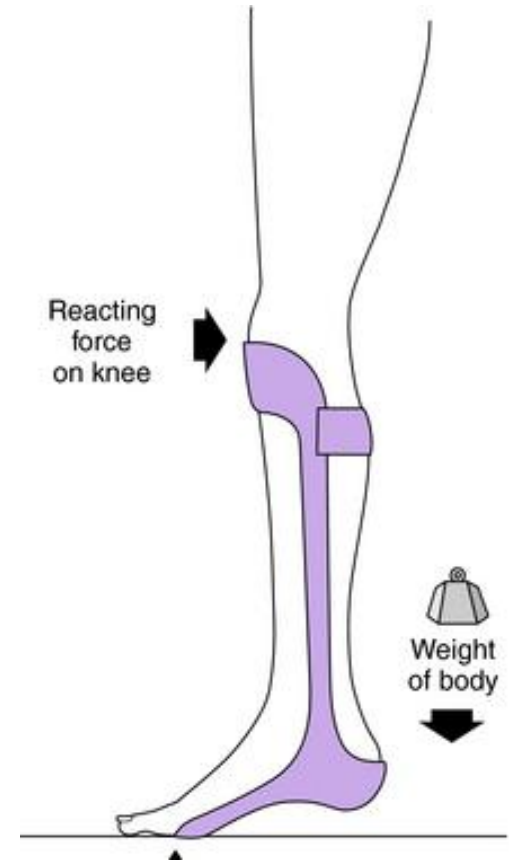
Strategies for Gait Abnormality in IBM

- If mild, a cane or a walking pole may be enough
- Provides extra-sensory feedback
- Do not underestimate the power of cane!



Strategies for Gait Abnormality in IBM

- Ankle brace can significantly reduce fall risks!
- Recommended for patients who actually walk
- Brace needs to be designed by a specialist! (don't go to Walmart for this!)



Strategies for Gait Abnormality in IBM

- Rolling walker is excellent for long distance walking
- Can sit for rest
- Don't worry, you don't look old(er) on a walker!



Wheelchairs

- Must be
- Who's
- How to
- Preven
sore



Motorized wheelchair ≠ Scooter



New rehab technologies - exoskeleton

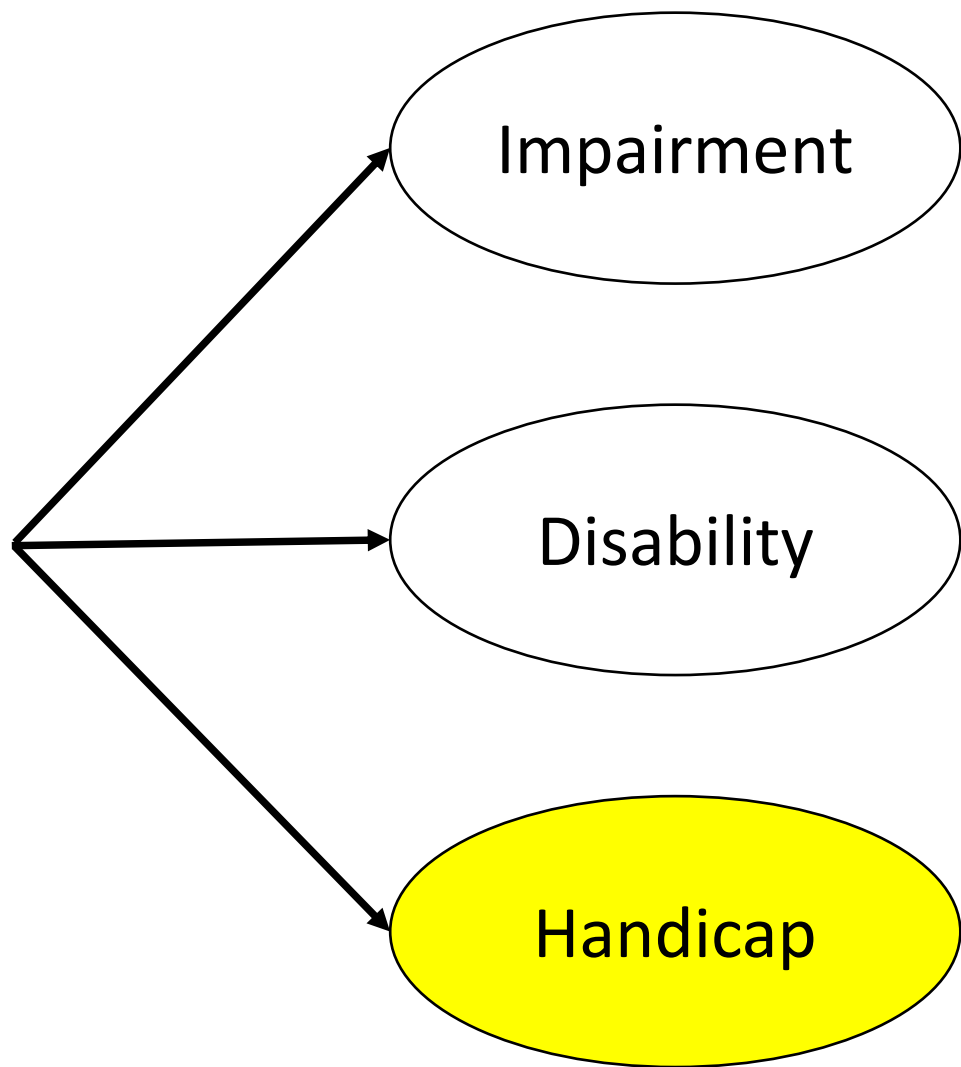
- Paralyzed patients can walk
- Limitation: battery life, stairs, and uneven surfaces



Difficulty Swallowing

- Requires swallowing evaluation by “speech therapists”
- Dietary modification
- Esophageal dilatation
- Swallowing exercise

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Impairment

Disability

Handicap

Myositis

Identifying Handicap

- Wheelchair access?
- Use of public toilet – safe? Independent?
- Consider home therapy, nursing facility, etc.
- Important to identify therapists or social workers who are familiar with resources

Summary

- Three different aspects of disease: impairment, disability, and handicap
- There are various ways to address disability and handicap
- Psychiatric intervention can be helpful

Where can you find physiatrists?

- Google PM&R doctors around your area!
- More information can be found in AAPMR (American Association of PM&R) website:
<https://www.aapmr.org/about-physiatry/about-physical-medicine-rehabilitation>

QUESTIONS?