



**Risky Behaviour among Intravenous Drug Users (IDUs)
with Respect to the Self-management of Needle-inflicted
Wounds, Damaged Veins, and Limb Ulcers: A Comparative
Descriptive Review between South Africa and China**

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ABSTRACT Intravenous drug users are exposed to great risk, not only through exposure to HIV infection, but also as a consequence of attempting to treat the injuries which result from injecting drugs. This paper takes the form of a review of relevant available literature, in order to assess the risks to which IDUs expose themselves and suggest possible measures for containing the hazards which are inherent in self-medication. The findings of the review revealed that stigmatisation, isolation, discrimination, and the criminalisation of possession of drugs all influence the inclination of IDUs to avoid seeking medical treatment. The researchers believe that policies pertaining to the use of illicit drugs should be restructured or reformulated to prioritise the rights and well-being of IDUs and encourage them to seek primary healthcare treatment, as opposed to attempting to tackle the social problem of intravenous drug abuse through punitive law enforcement.