

Infographic

An Infographic Presenting the Types of Self-injurious Behaviours

Anam Khan¹, MA

¹Faculty of Health, Dalhousie University

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Abstract

To this day, there is immense confusion among clinicians and researchers on which behaviours fall under the rubric of self-injurious behaviours (SIBs) or on how to categorize them into meaningful groups (Simeon & Favazza, 2001). It was not until 2013, that Non-Suicidal Self Injury (NSSI) Disorder was included in the DSM 5 and recognized as a unique clinical entity (Gratz et al., 2015). Even so, SIBs have numerous jargons where the word 'self-harm', though most frequently used, is often confused with other related behaviours. The most essential condition of self-injurious behaviour whether suicidal or non-suicidal is that the self-harm or potential for self-harm itself is a deliberate consequence of the behaviour. Thus, it is distinct from acts that are dangerous but not undertaken with the motivation to inflict harm on oneself such as driving fast or drinking excessively and behaviours that are culturally and socially sanctioned such as tattoos, piercings or religious rituals. The present infographic is an overview of SIBs. It especially focuses on the various types of NSSI, in the order of increasing lethality. The three NSSI groups presented are mild, moderate, and severe, placed based on tissue damage, followed by examples and exclusions. Though the lists are not exhaustive, the purpose was to help distinguish between the various types of SIBs. The infographic is based on existing literature and classification systems and is aimed at presenting a quick and simple understanding of SIBs, particularly NSSI, that can be of interest to clinicians, researchers, and the general population

References

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TYPES OF SELF-INJURIOUS BEHAVIOURS

Deliberate behaviours for which the end goal is to inflict harm to oneself

NON SUICIDAL SELF-INJURIOUS BEHAVIOURS

with no intent to die

SUICIDAL SELF-INJURIOUS BEHAVIOURS

with intent to die

SUICIDE

SUICIDE ATTEMPT

INTERRUPTED ATTEMPT

ABORTED ATTEMPT

PREPARATORY ACTS

MILD

SUPERFICIAL INJURIES OR BEHAVIOURS WITHOUT VISIBLE INJURY

Self-poisoning

- Overdose (Ingesting a substance in excess than generally prescribed or considered therapeutic)
- Recreational drug ingestion
- Swallowing chemicals

Self-punishment

- Exercising to hurt oneself
- Stopping medication or starving

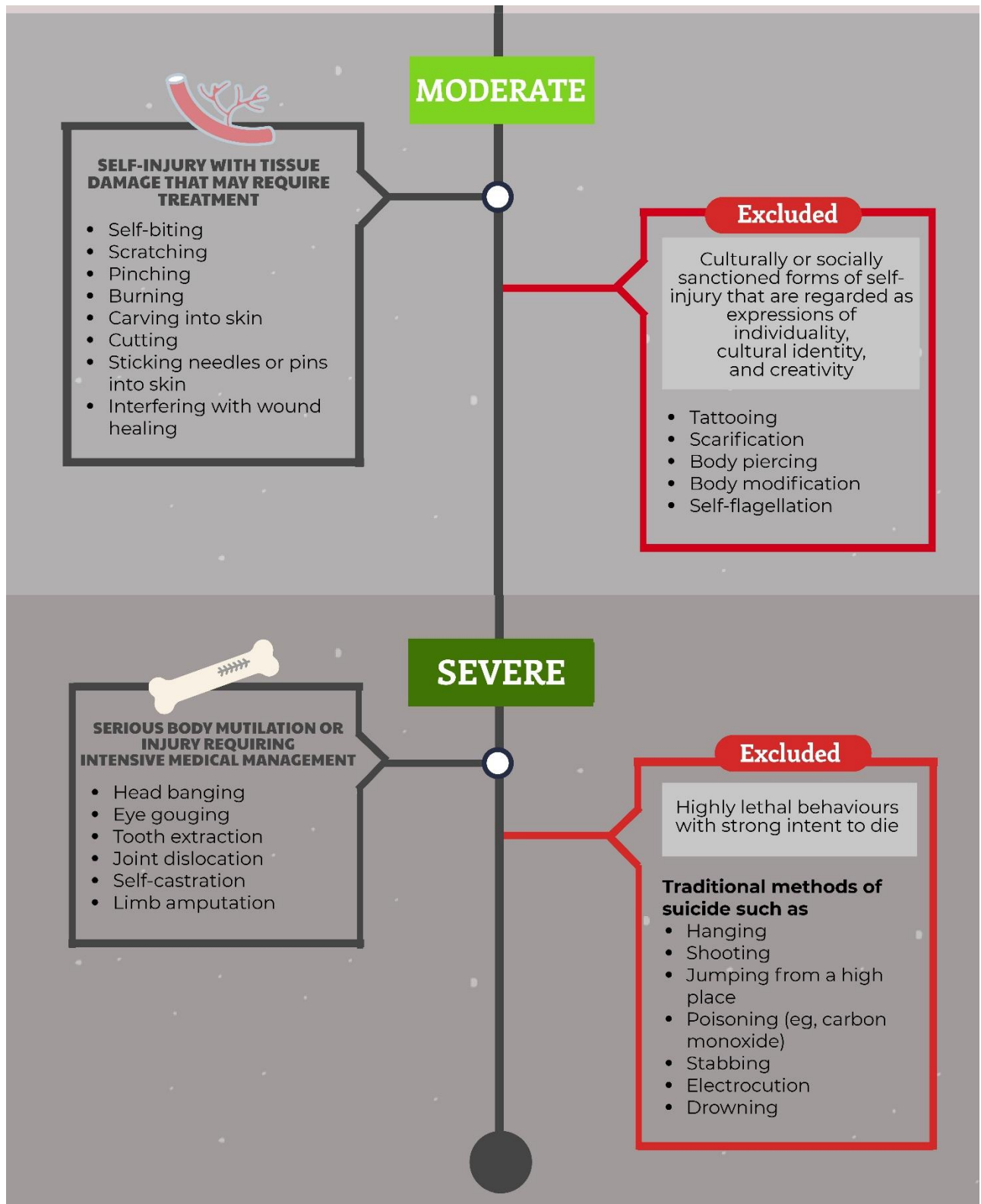
Excluded

Behaviours that have the potential for injury, though self-injury may not be the primary intent

Thrill seeking behaviours

- High-risk driving
- Adventure sports such as skydiving
- Deliberate recklessness

Substance abuse



Note: Various terms are used to refer to self-injurious behaviours (SIBs) such as non-suicidal self-injury, deliberate self-harm, self-directed violence, and self-mutilation, regardless of intent. Although the crucial distinction between suicidal and non-suicidal SIB hinges upon intent to die, Nock (2014) argues that issues in classifying intent itself may further pose difficulties in developing a widely accepted classification system. Therefore, such ambiguities in the conceptualization of the phenomenon lead to difficulty separating self-injury from culturally nuanced definitions of interrelated topics such as substance abuse, mental illness, and suicide (Khan & Ungar, in press).

Severity classification has been recognized as critical for surveillance, epidemiological investigations and evaluations of programs and policies aimed at mitigating the impact of injury at both the individual and societal levels (Crosby et al., 2011). This infographic categorizes SIB based on injury severity which according to Crosby et al., (2011) is defined as the impact of an injury in terms of the extent of tissue damage and/or the physiologic response of the body to that damage.