



DEMONIC FORCES OF DECAY COMPILATION

This document contains a compilation of content designed to help you run adventures featuring themes of rot, disease, and decay, particularly due to demonic influences. This content includes a disease-themed druid circle player option, new spells, magic items, mechanics for creating your own diseases, and a bestiary of demons of decay.

DRUID CIRCLE

CIRCLE OF PLAGUES

Druids of the circle of plagues bond with the countless diseases and maladies brought about by nature. While other druids may disavow the pestilent afflictions which arise from the natural world, these plague druids revere them. They view the squeamishness of other druids as a sign of weakness and naivete, for to truly embrace nature is to accept every life form, even horrid diseases.

Plague druids excel at infecting creatures with a variety of ever-evolving diseases. While these afflictions can quickly bring their enemies low, those lucky enough to earn the druid's favor will find themselves enhanced by their infections. Just as diseases quickly adapt to better spread amongst their victims, these druids constantly adapt and evolve their plagues to suit their situation.

CIRCLE SPELLS

2nd Level Circle of Plagues Feature

You have an innate connection to the pestilent aspects of nature, resulting in you knowing the *chill touch* cantrip. It counts as a druid cantrip for you, but it doesn't count against your number of cantrips known.

Your pestilent magic also grants you access to some spells when you reach certain levels in this class, as shown on the Circle of Plagues Spells table. Once you gain access to one of these spells, you always have it prepared, and it doesn't count against the number of spells you can prepare each day. If you gain access to a spell that doesn't appear on the Druid Spell List, the spell is nonetheless a druid spell for you.

Druid Level	Spells
2nd	<i>bane, miasma of pestilence*</i> ,
3rd	<i>blindness/deafness, stream of corruption*</i>
5th	<i>puddle of ooze*, stinking cloud</i>
7th	<i>blight, racist visitation*</i>
9th	<i>cloudkill, contagion</i>

*New spells found in *Spells of Decay* section

PRODUCE PATHOGEN

2nd Level Circle of Plagues Feature

You can summon a specialized disease strain to bolster allies and wither enemies. As a bonus action, you can expend a use of your Wild Shape feature to attempt to infect a creature within 5 feet of you. It must make a Constitution saving throw against your spell save DC, which it can choose to fail. On a failure, it is infected with a disease with one symptom of your choice. You may automatically infect yourself with the same disease when you use this feature.

Whenever a creature is infected by one of your diseases, you can choose to make it a Symbiotic Host rather than a Victim, in which case it gains positive effects from the disease. The symptoms for Victims and Symbiotic Hosts are described in the Disease Symptoms section at the end of this document.

At the start of each of your turns, all infected creatures must make a Constitution saving throw against your spell save DC, which they can choose to fail. On a successful save, creatures end the disease on themselves.

After these saves are made, every creature that's still infected spreads its disease to another uninfected creature within 5 feet of it. This uninfected creature must make the same saving throw or become infected with the same disease. If there are more than one uninfected creatures within 5 feet of an infected creature, you may choose which of the creatures becomes infected if you can see it. Otherwise, DM chooses one at random.

A creature can only be infected by the disease once and can't become infected by it again until you use this ability again.

The disease ends for all creatures after 10 minutes or if you use this feature again.

UNNATURAL IMMUNITY

6th Level Circle of Plagues Feature

You have resistance to necrotic damage and may also choose to automatically succeed any saving throws you make against diseases.

EVOLVING EPIDEMIC

6th Level Circle of Plagues Feature

You've learned how to mutate your diseases to better suit them to any given situation. When you use your Produce Pathogen feature, you may alter it with one of the following traits:

Air Born. An infected creature can now spread the disease to another uninfected creature within 30 feet of it.

Plague Missile. When you use Produce Pathogen, you can infect a creature up to 120 feet away from you rather than 5 feet from you.

Pestilent Hex. The disease can't spread beyond yourself and the initial target, but you may choose two different Symptoms for the disease, and the target creature has disadvantage on the saving throw against becoming infected.

Super Spreader. An infected creature now spreads the disease to each creature within 5 feet of it rather than just one.



PAROXYSM

10th Level Circle of Plagues Feature

When a creature that is not a symbiotic host for a disease fails its saving throw at the end of its turn against that disease, it suffers from the disease's severe symptom effects until the disease ends. These severe symptoms do not replace the original symptoms unless stated otherwise.

PLAGUE SHAPE

14th Level Circle of Plagues Feature

When you use your Produce Pathogen feature against a creature that fails its saving throw against the disease, you may transform into the very disease you are infecting it with, causing you to disappear into the infected creature. While inside the infected creature, you use the creature's senses and can't be targeted by any attack, spell, or other effect, except ones that target diseases.

Additionally, you can't concentrate on spells unless they are from your Circle of Plagues Spell List, and you can't interact with the outside world in any way other than by casting spells from your Circle of Plagues Spell List. Spells cast this way don't require components and are treated as though you are occupying the infected creature's space.

Creatures you are infecting in this form have disadvantage on saving throws against your spells unless they are symbiotic hosts, in which case they automatically succeed. Symbiotic hosts you are infecting take no damage from your spells if they would normally take half damage on a successful save.

If you attempt to spread your disease from the creature you're inhabiting to one or more creatures, you may impose disadvantage on the saving throw one of those creatures makes to avoid becoming infected. If it fails its saving throw and becomes infected, you move from your current host to this new creature as part of the infection. This does not end the disease affecting the previous creature.

This form ends if your host creature dies, the disease affecting it ends, or you use your bonus action to return to your normal form. Additionally, the host creature can use its action to make a Charisma saving throw against your spell save DC, ending this effect on a success, though this does not end the disease affecting it. When the effect ends, you reappear in the nearest unoccupied space of your choice.



DESCRIBING SYMPTOMS

The names of the symptoms listed here are meant to provide simple and easily recognizable descriptions of what's happening to the infected creature. However, you can come up with your own descriptions to fit the symptom's effects. For example, the continual damage dealt by the Fever symptom could instead be described as being caused by flesh-eating bacteria, and the effects of Nausea could instead be caused by muscle spasms.

DISEASE SYMPTOMS

The following disease symptoms are presented in alphabetical order.

DELIRIUM

Victim Effects. Attack rolls have advantage against the infected creature as long as there are three or more creatures within 5 feet of it.

Symbiotic Host Effects. Attack rolls have disadvantage against the symbiotic host as long as there are three or more creatures within 5 feet of it.

Severe Victim Effects. The infected creature suffers the effects of the *enemies abound* spell.

FATIGUE

Victim Effects. The infected creature's speed is reduced by 10 feet.

Symbiotic Host Effects. The symbiotic host's speed is increased by 10 feet.

Severe Victim Effects. The infected creature's speed is halved, it can't use reactions, and on its turn, it can use either an action or a bonus action, not both.

FEVER

Victim Effects. At the start of the infected creature's turn, it takes necrotic damage equal to your Wisdom modifier + half your druid level (rounded up).

Symbiotic Host Effects. When a symbiotic host is infected by this disease, it gains temporary hit points Wisdom modifier + half your druid level (rounded up). These temporary hit points last until the disease ends.

Severe Victim Effects. At the start of the infected creature's turn, it takes necrotic damage equal to your Wisdom modifier + twice your druid level. This replaces the damage dealt by the initial effect.

MIND FIRE

Victim Effects. Whenever the infected creature makes an ability check, attack roll, or saving throw that uses its Charisma, Intelligence, or Wisdom modifier, it must roll a d4 and subtract the number rolled from the ability check, attack roll, or saving throw.

Symbiotic Host Effects. Whenever the symbiotic host makes an ability check, attack roll, or saving throw that uses its Charisma, Intelligence, or Wisdom modifier, it may roll a d4 and add the number rolled to the ability check, attack roll, or saving throw.

Severe Victim Effects. Whenever the infected creature casts a spell of first level or higher, it takes 1d12 psychic damage per level of the spell.

NAUSEA

Victim Effects. Whenever the infected creature makes an ability check, attack roll, or saving throw that uses its Constitution, Dexterity, or Strength modifier, it must roll a d4 and subtract the number rolled from the ability check, attack roll, or saving throw.

Symbiotic Host Effects. Whenever the symbiotic host makes an ability check, attack roll, or saving throw that uses its Constitution, Dexterity, or Strength modifier, it may roll a d4 and add the number rolled to the ability check, attack roll, or saving throw.

Severe Victim Effects. Damage dealt by an infected creature's weapon attacks is halved.

WEEPING EYES

Victim Effects. The infected creature is unable to see anything farther than 30 feet away from it.

Symbiotic Host Effects. The symbiotic host gains blindsight out to a range of 10 feet. If it already has blindsight, its range increases by 10 feet.

Severe Victim Effects. The infected creature is blinded.

ART CREDIT

- Deathrite Shaman - Steve Argyle, Wizards of the Coast
- Putrefy - Igor Kieryluk, Wizards of the Coast
- Illness in the Ranks - Nils Hamm, Wizards of the Coast

SPELLS OF DECAY

Spellcasters wielding magic of decay favor spells that inflict rot, disease, and entropy. While many existing D&D spells can represent this magic, the following new spells provide even more ways of bringing this putrescent style of sorcery into your campaigns.

MIASMA OF PESTILENCE

1st-level conjuration

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 20 feet

Components: V S M (A bit of durian fruit)

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

Classes: Bard, Sorcerer, Wizard

A cloud of putrescent vapor appears in a 10-foot-radius sphere centered on a point within range. The cloud spreads around corners, and its area is lightly obscured. The cloud lingers in the air for the duration or until a moderate wind (at least 5 miles per hour) disperses it after 4 rounds. A strong wind (at least 10 miles per hour) disperses it after 1 round.

Each creature completely within the cloud at the start of its turn must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is poisoned until the start of its next turn. While poisoned in this way, the target can take either an action or a bonus action on its turn, not both, and can't take reactions. Creatures that don't need to breathe automatically succeed on this saving throw.

PUDDLE OF OOZE

3rd-level conjuration

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 120 feet

Components: V, S, M (a bit of slug slime)

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

Classes: Artificer, Druid, Sorcerer

You cover the ground in a 20-foot radius centered on a point within range with acidic ooze, causing it to become difficult terrain for the duration. When a creature moves into or within the area, it takes 1d4 acid damage for every 5 feet it travels.

When the ooze appears, each creature standing in its area must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or fall prone and take 3d4 acid damage. A creature that enters the area or ends its turn there must also succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or fall prone and take 3d4 acid damage.

RANCID VISITATION

4th-level necromancy

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Components: V, S

Duration: 1 minute

Classes: Druid, Cleric, Warlock

Make a melee spell attack against a creature you can reach. On a hit, it takes 4d10 necrotic damage and is afflicted with a disease that lasts until the spell ends.

A creature afflicted by this disease takes 4d10 necrotic damage at the start of each of your turns and must then make a Constitution saving throw, ending the disease on a success.

If a diseased creature drops to 0 hit points before this spell ends, you can end the disease on the creature and cause it to infect a new creature of your choice that you can see within 30 feet of it. The new creature must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or be infected with the same disease for the remainder of the spell's duration.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 5th level or higher, each time it would deal damage, it deals an additional 1d10 necrotic damage for each slot level above 4th.

SPIRIT LEECH

1st-level necromancy

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 90 feet

Components: V S

Duration: 1 hour

Classes: Warlock

You extend a hand towards a target creature within range and siphon away its essence. The target must make a Charisma saving throw. It takes 1d12 necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one. You gain temporary hit points equal to the necrotic damage dealt for the duration. This spell has no effect on constructs.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 2nd level or higher, the damage increases by 1d12 for each slot level above 1st.

STREAM OF CORRUPTION

2nd-level evocation

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Self (30-foot cone) or 100 feet

Components: S, M (a vial of meltwater)

Duration: Instantaneous

Classes: Sorcerer, Warlock, Wizard

Bile spews forth from you in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a Constitution saving throw. A creature takes 3d8 necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

When you cast this spell, you may instead choose a creature within 100 feet of you that you can see and force it to make a Constitution saving throw. On failed save, it takes 3d8 necrotic damage, and you may cause the cone of bile described above to spew forth from the creature in the direction you choose. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and does not spew bile.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, increase the necrotic damage dealt to targeted creatures and creatures in the area of the cone of bile by 1d8 for each slot level above 2nd.



MAGIC ITEMS OF DECAY

Powerful demons or cults of disease and decay will sometimes craft magical items which channel their foul powers. They may wield these items themselves or gift them to worthy devotees. The following magic items can be used to represent these gifts of decay in your campaign.

FETID SHROUD

Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)

The shroud feels and smells as though it's been soaked in a fever sweat. The air around it is thick and chokes any who linger too close.

While wearing this shroud, any creature which starts its turn within 5 feet of you must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn.

A creature that successfully saves against this effect is immune to the effects of this shroud for 1 hour.

FLAIL OF PESTILENCE

Flail, very rare (requires attunement)

Said to be crafted from the growths and encrusted puss spewed out by a demon of decay, this flail inflicts those it strikes with demonic rot.

Once during your turn, when you hit a creature with an attack using this weapon, you may force the target to make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 3d8 necrotic damage, and after failing three of these saving throws within one minute, it is afflicted with one of the diseases described by the *contagion* spell (your choice) for one minute.

FLESH PEELING BELL

Wondrous item, very rare (Requires Attunement by a Druid, Sorcerer, Warlock, or Wizard)

The cursed ringing of this bell accelerates decay, allowing necrotic magic to inflict wounds that quickly rot away their victim. It can be held in one hand and used as a spell casting focus.

Once per turn, while you are holding the bell, when you hit a creature with a spell attack that deals necrotic damage, or a creature fails its saving throw against a spell you cast that deals necrotic damage, you can inflict it with a wound. At the start of each of the wounded creature's turns, it takes 1d4 necrotic damage for each time you've wounded it, and it can then make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, ending the effect of all such wounds on itself on a success.

Alternatively, the wounded creature, or a creature within 5 feet of it, can use an action to make a DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check, ending the effect of all such wounds on it on a success.

HELM OF THE BLIGHTER

Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement by a druid)

This foul helm was crafted from decaying animal bones held together by blighted moss. While wearing this helm, any beast that a druid shapeshifts into becomes a rotting mockery of its natural form.

If you transform using your Wild Shape feature while wearing this helm, you may choose to take necrotic damage equal to 5 x CR of the creature you are transforming into. This damage can't be reduced or prevented in any way, and your hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. If this reduction reduces your hit point maximum to 0 or less, you die. This reduction lasts until you finish a long rest.

If you choose to take this damage while transforming using Wild Shape, your animal form has the following alterations:

- Your creature type changes to undead.
- You are immune to necrotic and poison damage and the poisoned condition.
- Whenever you deal damage with an attack in this form, you can change the damage type to necrotic or poison.
- Your form's hit points are increased by the amount equal to the necrotic damage you took from the helm when you transformed.

ROT BLADE

Weapon (any sword or axe), uncommon (requires attunement)

This rusty blade is encrusted with the entrails of plague victims, and those it cuts are quickly infected with lethal diseases.

Once per turn, when you hit a creature with an attack using this weapon, you can force it to make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, it is inflicted with the blade's disease. At the start of each of the inflicted creature's turns, it takes 1d6 necrotic damage and then makes a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, ending the disease on a success. Once a creature becomes infected by the blade, it can't be infected again for the next 24 hours.

SHIELD OF GROWTHS

Wondrous item, rare

The rusted frame of this shield is reinforced with living blubber and grime, which feeds off the open wounds of its wielder.

While holding this shield, whenever you take damage from an attack, the shield grants an additional +1 bonus to AC until the start of your next turn. It can increase its AC up to 4 times this way within a turn.

STAFF OF DECAY

Wondrous item, very rare (Requires Attunement by a Druid, Sorcerer, Warlock, or Wizard)

This blighted staff was carved from the rotting wood of a dying treant and holds power over the processes of death and decay.



You have resistance to necrotic damage while you hold this staff.

The staff has 10 charges. While holding it, you can use an action to expend 1 or more of its charges to cast one of the following spells from it, using your spell save DC: *inflict wounds* (1 charge), *stream of corruption** (2 charges), *blight* (4 charges), or *circle of death* (6 charges).

The staff regains 1d6 + 4 expended charges daily at dawn. If you expend the last charge, roll a d20. On a 1, the staff melts into brackish water and is destroyed.

**New spell found in Spells of Decay section*

ART CREDIT

- Ghoullinger's Bell - Lars Grant-West, Wizards of the Coast
- Swarm Guildmage - Simon Dominic, Wizards of the Coast



DISEASE MECHANICS

Diseases, both magical and mundane, can provide environmental hazards or be the focus of entire adventures. Diseases could be caused by viruses, bacteria, parasites, or magical maladies. The ways creatures can contract them, their symptoms, and their cures vary wildly.

This document provides a systemic way of defining individual diseases, similar to the way spells are described. The following tools will allow you to custom craft diseases for your games, and the examples given at the end of the document can be used as creative inspiration or dropped right into your adventures.

DISEASE ATTRIBUTES

The following attributes can be used to describe the mechanics of any given disease.

TARGETS

This lists the types of creatures this disease can infect.

TRANSMISSION

This is the means through which a creature can potentially contract the disease. For example, being hit with a bite attack from an infected creature or being within 10 feet of an infected creature for 1 minute.

SAVING THROW

This is the type of save and DC of that save that a creature must make if subjected to the conditions described by Transmission. The initial save to determine if a player character is infected should be made in secret by the DM. If the creature succeeds on the saving throw, it is not infected.

Unless stated otherwise, the creature that succeeds can still be forced to make the saving throw again if subjected to the transmission conditions again.

INCUBATION TIME

This is the time between the contraction of the disease and the manifestation of the first symptoms.

STARTING SEVERITY

Many diseases have different stages of severity, with each stage having its own symptoms. This describes the severity level creatures start with when they first display symptoms.

INCREASING SEVERITY RATE

This is the time it takes the disease to potentially reach a higher level of severity. At this point, the infected creature repeats the saving throw against the disease. On a failure, the disease increases in severity.

SAVE DC MODIFIER

Some diseases become progressively easier or more difficult to cure as time goes on. This describes the change to the save DC each time the infected creature makes a saving throw against the disease. This change is applied before the saving throw is made.

REVERSIBLE SEVERITY

This true/false statement describes whether a creature can naturally shrug off the effects of the disease without outside intervention. If it is true, then whenever a creature succeeds on its saving throw against the disease increasing in severity, the severity of the disease decreases. If the severity level reaches 0, the creature is cured of the disease.

CURES

These are any outside effects that can cure a creature of the disease. They could include anything from different types of potions and herbs to healing ceremonies performed at specific sacred sites.

SEVERITY LEVELS

This lists the descriptions of the symptoms at each severity level.

CURING DISEASES WITH MAGICAL ABILITIES

Abilities like *lessor restoration* and *Lay on Hands* can instantly cure most diseases. If you wish to make diseases more difficult to remove, you can use or modify either of the following rules additions.

ABILITY CHECK TO CURE

Whoever uses the ability to attempt to cure the disease must succeed on an ability check against the disease's current save DC to eradicate it successfully. If the ability being used to cure the disease is a feature granted by a class with a spellcasting feature, the healer can add their Spell Attack Modifier for that class to the ability check. Otherwise, the healer can add their Wisdom modifier + their proficiency modifier to the ability check.

CURING BY SEVERITY LEVEL

When an ability that cures diseases is used on a diseased creature, it only reduces the severity level by 1. If you are using the Ability Check to Cure rule, you can allow the healer to reduce an additional severity level if the check's result was 5 or more over the disease's DC. You can extend this rule to allow a result of 10 over the DC to cure 2 additional severity levels, 15 over the DC to cure 3 additional severity levels, and so on.

EXAMPLE DISEASE SCENARIO

The following is an example of a disease and how it could play out in a typical game.

HEAD CHILLS

This is a fairly mundane sickness that is highly contagious and impairs its target's effectiveness in almost every way. Fortunately, it is not a deadly disease, and its symptoms almost always clear on their own.

Targets: Any humanoid

Transmission: A target starts its turn within 5 feet of an infected and symptomatic creature

Saving Throw: DC 13 Constitution Saving Throw

Incubation Time: 1d3 days

Starting Severity: 2

Increasing Severity Rate: Every 1 Day

Save DC Modifier: -1

Reversible Severity: True

Cures: Eating an apple grown from a treant

Severity Levels:

- **Severity 1:** Whenever the infected creature makes an attack roll, saving throw, or ability check it must roll a d4 and subtract the number rolled from the attack roll or saving throw.
- **Severity 2:** Whenever the infected creature makes an attack roll, saving throw, or ability check it must roll a d6 and subtract the number rolled from the attack roll or saving throw.
- **Severity 3:** Whenever the infected creature makes an attack roll, saving throw, or ability check it must roll a d8 and subtract the number rolled from the attack roll or saving throw.

If you are running the example disease described above, a player character will need to be within five feet of an infected creature to risk contracting the disease. Every time the character starts its turn close to the infected creature, you make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw for that character in secret. Repeat this saving throw every time the character starts its turn within 5 feet of the infected creature until the character contracts the disease. Do not tell the player if or when their character is infected.

If the character is infected, the symptoms described by Severity 2 will be experienced in 1 to 3 days, at which point the player will learn their character is infected. After a day of being infected, the character makes another Constitution saving throw against the disease (which can now be made by the player.) Because the DC modifier is -1, the save DC is now 12. On a failed save, the Severity of the character's symptoms increase to 3, and on a successful save, they decrease to 1.

The character continues to make saving throws each day, with the save DC decreasing by 1 each time. Failed saves move the severity up one level, and successful saves move it down one level. This continues until the severity moves to 0, and which point the character is cured.

The disease ends early if the character consumes an apple grown from a treant or is subjected to an effect that removes diseases.



EXAMPLE DISEASES

The following are examples of other types of diseases with a variety of attributes. You can drop them right into your games as they are, modify them to better suit your adventures, or use them as inspiration for new diseases of your own.

ABYSSAL ROT

This disease is inflicted by demons and rots the body before devouring the soul.

Targets: Any humanoid

Transmission: A target takes damage from a weapon tainted with the disease

Saving Throw: DC 15 Constitution Saving Throw

Incubation Time: 1 hour

Starting Severity: 1

Increasing Severity Rate: Every 1 Hour

Save DC Modifier: +1

Reversible Severity: False

Cures: The Healing Touch ability of an angel

Severity Levels:

- **Severity 1 - 10:** Whenever the creature takes necrotic or poison damage while infected, its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the disease is cured. Whenever the disease's severity increases, the creature takes necrotic damage equal to 1d10 + the new severity level. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0, at which point it is instantly transformed into a **plague bearer**. This transformation can only be undone by a *wish* spell.

BLOODY TEARS

This painful infection causes bleeding from the eyes and eventually blinds the victim.

Targets: Any beast or humanoid

Transmission: The target drinks or submerges its face in water tainted with this disease

Saving Throw: DC 15 Constitution Saving Throw

Incubation Time: 1 day

Starting Severity: 1

Increasing Severity Rate: Every 24 Hours

Save DC Modifier: 0

Reversible Severity: False

Cures: Bloody tears can be cured using a rare flower called Eyebright, which grows in some swamps. Given an hour, a character who has proficiency with an herbalism kit can turn the flower into one dose of ointment. When applied to the eyes, one dose of the ointment prevents the disease from worsening for the next 24 hours. After three doses, the ointment cures the disease entirely.

Severity Levels:

- **Severity 1-4:** The creature takes a penalty to attack rolls and ability checks that rely on sight equal to the severity level of the disease.
- **Severity 5:** The creature takes a -5 penalty to attack rolls and ability checks that rely on sight and suffers from the blinded condition.

CKACKLE FEVER

This disease targets humanoids, although gnomes are strangely immune. While in the grips of this disease, victims frequently succumb to fits of mad laughter, giving the disease its Common name and its morbid nickname: "the shrieks."

Targets: Any non-gnome humanoid

Transmission: A target starts its turn within 10 feet of an infected creature in the throes of mad laughter

Saving Throw: DC 10 Constitution Saving Throw

Incubation Time: 1d4 hours

Starting Severity: 3

Increasing Severity Rate: Every 24 Hours

Save DC Modifier: -1

Reversible Severity: True

Cures: Sucking on a lemon blessed by a gnomish priest

Severity Levels:

- **Severity 1-3:** Any event that causes the infected creature great stress—including entering combat, taking damage, experiencing fear, or having a nightmare—forces the creature to make a DC Constitution saving throw against the disease's saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 5 (1d10) psychic damage and becomes incapacitated with mad laughter for 1 minute. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the mad laughter and the incapacitated condition on a success. A creature that fails three of these Saving Throws within 24 hours gains a randomly determined form of indefinite madness, as described DMG.

GIANT'S BANE

This disease causes its host's muscles to weaken and become useless. This affliction is said to have plagued giants for ages and can be contracted by humanoids.

Targets: Any giant or humanoid

Transmission: A target ends its turn within 5 feet of an infected creature. Giants have disadvantage on the saving throw to avoid infection.

Saving Throw: DC 14 Constitution Saving Throw

Incubation Time: 1 day

Starting Severity: 1

Increasing Severity Rate: Every 24 Hours

Save DC Modifier: +1

Reversible Severity: True

Cures: The tooth of a dragon old enough to at least be considered an adult. The tooth must be ground down and consumed by the infected creature.

Severity Levels:

- **Severity 1:** The infected creature makes ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws that use its Constitution, Dexterity, or Strength modifier with disadvantage.
- **Severity 2:** The infected creature suffers the effects of Severity 1, and damage dealt by its weapon attacks that use Strength are halved.
- **Severity 3:** The creature falls prone and is paralyzed.



SEWER PLAGUE

Sewer plague is a generic term for a broad category of illnesses that incubate in sewers, refuse heaps, and stagnant swamps and are sometimes transmitted by creatures that dwell in those areas, such as **rats** and **otyughs**.

Targets: Any humanoid or beast (other types of creatures might carry the disease but suffer no symptoms)

Transmission: A target is bitten by a creature that carries the disease, or it comes into contact with filth or offal contaminated by the disease

Saving Throw: DC 11 Constitution Saving Throw

Incubation Time: 1d4 days

Starting Severity: 1

Increasing Severity Rate: Every 24 Hours

Save DC Modifier: 0

Reversible Severity: True

Cures: The creature must drink a flask's worth of holy water and go 24 hours without eating or drinking anything else.

Severity Levels:

- **Severity 1-6:** The infected creature regains only half the normal number of hit points from spending hit dice and no hit points from finishing a long rest. It also suffers a level of exhaustion for each severity level of its symptoms. This exhaustion can't be removed until the disease is cured.

ABYSSAL ROT (CONDENSED)

If you want to incorporate Abyssal Rot into your games because it's used by demons of decay, but you don't want to use the rules for diseases, you can refer to the description for Abyssal Rot below. This description is a streamlined version that doesn't require knowledge of the disease mechanics described previously.

ABYSSAL ROT

This disease is inflicted by demons and rots the body before devouring the soul. An hour after becoming infected, the victim begins displaying symptoms, and the Severity Level of the disease becomes 1.

Whenever the creature takes necrotic or poison damage while displaying symptoms, its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the disease is cured.

Every hour after the creature first displays symptoms, it repeats the saving throw against the disease, but with the save DC 1 higher than the last time the creature made the save. If the creature fails the saving throw, the Severity Level increases by 1, and it takes necrotic damage equal to 1d10 plus the disease's Severity Level.

If the disease reduces a creature's hit point maximum to 0, it is instantly transformed into a **plague bearer**. This transformation can only be undone by a *wish* spell.

The healing touch ability of an angel or other celestial will instantly cure Abyssal Rot.

SECRET INFECTION ROLLS

When a player character must make a saving throw to determine if they are infected by a disease, it is usually better for the GM to make the roll in secret since the character won't know they're infected. A Wisdom (Medicine) check can be made to determine if a creature has been infected before it starts displaying symptoms. For Abyssal Rot, a DC of 15 for this check is an appropriate baseline, though you may alter it for other diseases and circumstances.

Subsequent rolls made to determine if the player character fights off the effects of the disease should usually be made by the player.

ART CREDIT

- Undercity Plague - Vincent Proce, Wizards of the Coast
- Tainted Remedy - Izzy, Wizards of the Coast
- Crippling Blight - Lucas Graciano, Wizards of the Coast



DEMONS OF DECAY

Demons represent the dark, chaotic impulses of humanity made manifest. Different demons represent different aspects of this darkness, but none are as revolting as the demons of decay. These demons are born from the tendency of mortals to neglect themselves and the world they live in, thus allowing disease and entropy to run their course unopposed. In some worlds, these fiends operate independently to spread plagues and decay. On others, they act in service to a mighty demon lord or demonic god who presides over the domain of rot and disease.

Unnatural Vitality. Demons of decay are easily recognized by their bloated, rotting, disease-ridden forms. The decaying nature of their bodies does not mean these fiends are fragile or easy to slay. Demons of decay can shrug off incredible amounts of punishment relative to their size while their would-be slayers slowly succumb to terrible afflictions. Many who worship these demons do so in hopes of gaining this unnatural vitality, even if it means subjecting themselves to horrific rot and disease.

Cheerful Nihilists. Demons of decay represent the inevitable deterioration of all things. Those who have succumbed to nihilism and apathy are especially vulnerable to their influence. Yet, these demons and their followers are almost always jolly and cheerful. They revel in the pointlessness of life and celebrate the perpetual state of rot to which existence is subject. Those who worship these fiends often seek a means of escaping despair and fear of death, and by accepting the gifts of rot and disease, these worshippers cheerfully shed all their worries and woes.

THE DAZED CONDITION

Several of the abilities of these demons inflict the “Dazed” condition. At the time of this writing, this is a condition defined in the playtest material for D&D One. You can use the effects of that condition, or the following effect:

A dazed creature can’t take reactions and on its turn, it must choose whether it gets a move, an action, or a bonus action; it gets only one of the three.

Promoters of Life. The dark irony of these fiends is their genuine love of life. They hold a motherly love for all living things, including diseases and parasites, which they fail to see as any less important than other lifeforms. These fiends cast no judgments on the intrinsic worth of any lifeform and hold a deadly parasite in just as much esteem as a humanoid whom they believe should provide a home for as many parasites as possible.

They spread diseases not out of malice but out of a desire to see life thrive, even if it is in the form of a plague. Those who resist diseases, or worse, cure them, are seen as cruel destroyers of life by these fiends and their followers. Death and decay are inevitable, and the best one can do is provide a loving home for as many other forms of life as possible while letting go of the need to hold onto what can’t be maintained.



PLAGUE BEARERS OF DECAY

These fiends are created from the souls of mortals who have succumbed to demonic diseases. Their shambling humanoid bodies are bloated, rotten, and nearly zombie-like in appearance. Each of these fiends wields a rusted plaguesword, which carries the same disease that originally birthed it and is used to continue the proliferation of its kind. Those wounded by the sword risk contracting Abyssal Rot, a fiendish disease that transforms those who succumb to it into other plague bearers.

Plague bearers feel the responsibility not just to spread disease but to count and catalog all diseases they encounter in hopes of establishing a complete record of every pathogen in existence. Despite the impossible nature of this task, these neurotic fiends can often be heard counting illnesses they spot on the battlefield, groaning in frustration every time a distraction causes them to lose count.

Exalted Plague Bearers. Some plague bearers are significantly more powerful than their kin. These demons may have been particularly hardy mortals who fought off their fiendish infection for longer before finally succumbing, or they may be plague bearers who've survived long enough to earn the favor of their demon god. These "exalted" plague bearers are harder to kill, carry more virulent diseases, and possess greater levels of martial skill.

Festering Stooges. These plague bearers have been "blessed" with clouds of hungry flies that follow them wherever they go. The flies constantly distract the stooge from any tasks it tries to concentrate on, and it often makes fruitless attempts at shooing them away or attempting to count and name them all. These constant distractions result in festering stooges always appearing clumsy and scatterbrained.

Through some combination of bad luck and poor judgment, they often stumble into precarious situations that would spell the doom of most creatures. Luckily, their flies offer protection and regenerative abilities, ensuring that these stooges usually survive as they meander their way from one bubbling situation to the next.

PLAGUE BEARER

Medium fiend (demon of decay), chaotic evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 85 (10d8 + 40)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (0)	18 (+4)	10 (0)	16 (+3)	10 (0)

Saving Throws Con +6, Wis +5

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +5

Damage Resistances acid, cold, lightning

Damage Immunities poison, necrotic

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Fetid Stench. Any creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of the plague bearer must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of the plague bearer's next turn. While poisoned this way, the creature is dazed. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the Fetid Stench ability of all demons of decay for 1 hour.

If a creature would make multiple saving throws against the Fetid Stench abilities of multiple demons of decay, it instead makes a single saving throw. The save DC is equal to the highest save DC among the demons of decay plus 1 per saving throw that was forgone.

Living Plague. The plague bearer is immune to diseases, and if it is targeted by a spell or effect that cures disease, such as Lay on Hands or lesser restoration, it takes 20 radiant damage.

Actions

Plaguesword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become infected by Abyssal Rot (description in Disease Mechanics section).

ART CREDIT

- Cemetery Reaper - Dave Allsop, Wizards of the Coast
- Corpulent Corpse - Doug Chaffee, Wizards of the Coast

PLAGUE BEARER, EXALTED

Medium fiend (demon of decay), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 123 (13d8 + 65)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (0)	20 (+5)	10 (0)	16 (+3)	10 (0)

Saving Throws Con +8, Wis +6

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +6

Damage Resistances acid, cold, lightning

Damage Immunities poison, necrotic

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Fetid Stench. Any creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of the plague bearer must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. While poisoned this way, the creature is dazed. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the Fetid Stench ability of all demons of decay for 1 hour.

If a creature would make multiple saving throws against the Fetid Stench abilities of multiple demons of decay, it instead makes a single saving throw. The save DC is equal to the highest save DC among the demons of decay plus 1 per saving throw that was forgone.

Living Plague. The plague bearer is immune to diseases, and if it is targeted by a spell or effect that cures disease, such as Lay on Hands or lesser restoration, it takes 20 radiant damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The plague bearer makes two attacks.

Plaguesword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or become infected by Abyssal Rot (description in Disease Mechanics section).

Noxious Spew. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 20/40 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d6 + 3) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or become infected by Abyssal Rot (description in Disease Mechanics section).

PLAGUE BEARER, FESTERING STOOGES

Medium fiend (demon of decay), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 123 (13d8 + 65)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (0)	20 (+5)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +8, Wis +6, Cha +4

Skills Athletics +7, Performance +4

Damage Resistances acid, cold, lightning

Damage Immunities poison, necrotic

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Gloom of Flies. The area within 10 feet of the plague bearer is filled with flies, lightly obscuring it and turning it into difficult terrain for creatures who aren't demons of decay. Any creature that's not a demon of decay that starts its turn in this area must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution save or take 7 (2d6) piercing damage and become dazed until the start of its next turn. The plague bearer regains hit points equal to the damage dealt this way. If the stooge is killed, the cloud remains for 1 minute or until a wind of moderate or greater speed (at least 10 miles per hour) disperses it. If a creature takes damage from the cloud during this time, the plague bearer is returned to life with hit points equal to the damage dealt.

Living Plague. The plague bearer is immune to diseases, and if it is targeted by a spell or effect that cures disease, such as Lay on Hands or lesser restoration, it takes 20 radiant damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The plague bearer makes two attacks.

Plaguesword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or become infected by Abyssal Rot (description in Disease Mechanics section).

Noxious Spew. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 20/40 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (3d6 + 4) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or become infected by Abyssal Rot (description in Disease Mechanics section).

PLAGUE BEARER, PLAGUE-RIDDEN

Medium fiend (demon of decay), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 133 (14d8 + 70)
Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (0)	20 (+5)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +8, Wis +7
Skills Athletics +6, Perception +7
Damage Resistances acid, cold, lightning
Damage Immunities poison, necrotic
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Abyssal, telepathy 60 ft.
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Fetid Stench. Any creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of the plague bearer must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. While poisoned this way, the creature is dazed. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the Fetid Stench ability of all demons of decay for 1 hour.

If a creature would make multiple saving throws against the Fetid Stench abilities of multiple demons of decay, it instead makes a single saving throw. The save DC is equal to the highest save DC among the demons of decay plus 1 per saving throw that was forgone.

Living Plague. The plague bearer is immune to diseases, and if it is targeted by a spell or effect that cures disease, such as Lay on Hands or *lesser restoration*, it takes 20 radiant damage.

Locus of Rot. The plague bearer gains one of the Locus abilities listed below.

Magic Resistance. The plague bearer has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Actions

Multiattack. The plague bearer makes two attacks.

Poxsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage plus 13 (3d8) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or become infected by Abyssal Rot (description in Disease Mechanics section).

Spellcasting. The plague bearer casts one of the following spells, requiring no components and using Wisdom as its spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks):

1/day each: *cloudkill*, *mass cure wounds*, *rancid visitation**

*New spell found in *Spells of Decay* section

Plague Bearer Commanders. The most powerful plague bearers become leaders of entire hordes of entire rotting demons. They possess an ease and joviality at odds with their more serious kin and happily guide what they see as their fiendish family from one “party” to the next, spreading plagues and good cheer. The plague-ridden are lesser commanders who lead small parties of rotting demons, while heralds of decay are mighty lords who can shepherd teeming hordes of festering fiends.

PLAGUE RIDERS

If you wish to have any type of plague bearer you're using ride a controlled mount, you can give it the following trait:

Plague Rider. If the plague bearer has a controlled mount that is also a demon of decay, it can have the mount take the Attack action once on each of the plague bearer's turns.

These commanders draw power from the infections their kin spreads and happily share this power back with their fellow demons, continuing the cycle of life and death as they spread disease, draw power from the disease, and use that power to spread more disease. These mighty fiends are so infused with the powers of decay that they possess limited, but powerful, magical abilities that they can use to rapidly poison and rot away even the hardest of adventurers.

LOCUS OF ROT ABILITIES

The plague bearers who serve as commanders draw power from the infections of those around them and pass that power onto the demons they lead. Every plague-ridden and herald of decay has one of the following abilities.

Locus of Fecundity. The plague bearer and each demon of decay within 30 feet of it regains 5 hit points at the start of the plague bearer's turn per each non-demon of pestilence creature infected with Abyssal Rot within 30 feet of the plague bearer, up to a maximum of 20 hit points.

Locus of Virulence The plague bearer and each demon of decay within 30 feet of it have advantage on attack rolls against creatures infected with Abyssal Rot.

Locus of Contagion When a creature fails a saving throw against the Fetid Stench or Gloom of Flies abilities of a demon of decay while within 30 feet of the plague bearer, it is infected with Abyssal Rot.

PLAGUE BEARER, HERALD OF DECAY

Medium fiend (demon of decay), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 168 (16d8 + 96)
Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	22 (+6)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Con +10, Wis +9, Int +6, Cha +6
Skills Athletics +8, Perception +9
Damage Resistances acid, cold, lightning bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Damage Immunities poison, necrotic
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 19
Languages Abyssal, telepathy 60 ft.
Challenge 11 (7,200 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +4

Fetid Stench. Any creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of the plague bearer must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. While poisoned this way, the creature is dazed. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the Fetid Stench ability of all demons of decay for 1 hour.

If a creature would make multiple saving throws against the Fetid Stench abilities of multiple demons of decay, it instead makes a single saving throw. The save DC is equal to the highest save DC among the demons of decay plus 1 per saving throw that was forgone.

Living Plague. The plague bearer is immune to diseases, and if it is targeted by a spell or effect that cures disease, such as Lay on Hands or *lesser restoration*, it takes 20 radiant damage.

Locus of Rot. The plague bearer gains one of the Locus abilities listed below.

Magic Resistance. The plague bearer has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Actions

Multiattack. The plague bearer makes two attacks.

Balesword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage plus 22 (5d8) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or become infected by Abyssal Rot (description in Disease Mechanics section).

Spellcasting. The plague bearer casts one of the following spells, requiring no components and using Wisdom as its spellcasting ability (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks):

1/day each: *circle of death, harm, heal*

DEATH'S HEADS

These vile weapons are created from the skulls of those who have succumbed to demons of decay. They are thrown like grenades that explode into clouds of rot and disease. You may equip a plague bearer exalted plague bearer, or a festering stooge with 3 death heads. If you do, increase its CR by 1. The equipt creature can throw a death's head as an Attack action or in place of an attack that's part of its multiattack action.

NEW MAGIC ITEM: DEATH'S HEAD

Wondrous item, uncommon

As an action, if you are not restrained or grappled, you can hurl this item at a point you can see within 30 feet that is not behind total cover. The death's head detonates at this point, and each creature within 10 feet of it that's not behind total cover must make a DC 15 Constituion saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 13 (3d8) necrotic damage and becomes infected by Abyssal Rot (description in Disease Mechanics section). On a success, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't infected.

When you use your action to attempt to throw the death's head, creatures can use their reaction to make attacks of opportunity against you as though you moved out of their reach. If a creature hits you this way, you drop the death's head, and it detonates at your location.

PLAGUE BEARER ADVENTURE HOOKS

d6

Plot Hook

1 The players investigate the whereabouts of a group of missing plague victims who recently disappeared from their physician's care. No one knows they succumbed to their diseases and became plague bearers.

The players pass through several towns racked with sickness. In each town, people mention a rotted carriage that passed through without stopping. No one could see who was in it, and all they heard from within was a chorus strange gurgling laughter.

3 The players come across a decaying town whose entire population succumbed to Abyssal Rot. All its inhabitants are plague bearers acting out a twisted mockery of their former day-to-day lives.

4 A trio of festering stooges wanders the land, stumbling from one strange situation to another as they leave plague and ruin in their wake.

5 A military captain who succumbed to Abyssal Rot and became a plague-ridden now seeks to infect all his former troops and recreate demonic parody of the platoon he once led.

6 A group of bullywogs has fled their swamp homes seeking the aid of the players in stopping a herald of decay who has infested their territory.



PLAGUELINGS

These tiny disease-ridden fiends look like malevolent children twisted into rotting monsters. Their gaping mouths drool greenish slime as they cackle like wicked infants, dancing about and looking for new playthings. Plaguelings spawn from within greater demons of decay, growing within the putrid flesh of their parent demon, drawing sustenance from the bile and disease their host offers. Once the plagueling has grown to the size of a bloated infant, it erupts into the world, looking for more sustenance. Many plaguelings remain with their demon hosts, acting like coddled children, always looking for food and attention from their demonic caretaker.

Burrowing Parasites. Plaguelings retain the ability to burrow within other willing creatures. This is done through supernatural means that don't harm the host, though most mortals would find the process horribly disturbing. Demons of decay are often hosts to entire swarms of plaguelings that can burst forth at a moment's notice.

Pestilent Mischief Makers. Plaguelings prefer to stay near the protection of other demons of decay, but should one find itself on its own, it will seek out the nearest humanoid settlement to make mischief. Though a lone plagueling is little threat in combat, it can sneak through a town and threaten its inhabitants' health by spoiling food, poisoning water, and spreading sickness to children and animals.

PLAGUELING

Tiny fiend (demon of decay), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 6 (1d4 + 4)

Speed 20ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)

Saving Throws Con +6

Skills Perception +5 Stealth +5

Damage Resistances acid, cold, lightning

Damage Immunities poison, necrotic

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Living Plague. The plagueling is immune to diseases, and if it is targeted by a spell or effect that cures disease, such as *Lay on Hands* or *lesser restoration*, it takes 20 radiant damage.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage plus 2 (1d4) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, the plagueling attaches to it. While attached, at the start of each of the plagueling's turns, the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become infected by Abyssal Rot (described at in Disease Mechanics section).

The plagueling can detach itself by spending 5 feet of its movement. A creature, including the target, can use its action to detach the plagueling. The plagueling also detaches if it dies.

Noxious Cradle. The plagueling enters inside a willing creature that is Small or larger and within 5 feet of it. While inside the creature, the plagueling is blinded and has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the creature. A Small creature can have only one plagueling inside it at a time, and the creature can have an additional plagueling inside for each size above Small it is. The plagueling can use 5 feet of movement to leave the creature.



Overwhelming Numbers. Plaguelings are social creatures and prefer to congregate into swarms. When they reach these numbers, they go from hazardous nuisances to deadly threats. Plaguelings in a swarm can work together to move at much higher speeds than any one plagueling could individually as they glom onto each other and roll together in a tide of flesh and filth. When they reach their targets, the plaguelings latch onto their new playmates like children climbing on their parents, dragging them down and subjecting them to all manner of grizzly diseases.

Swarming Steeds. Bizarrely enough, demons of decay often use swarms of plaguelings as perverse steeds, allowing the writhing mass to carry them into battle. These swarms often hide inside the demon until it has need for them. A demon of decay that sees foes at a distance may suddenly vomit forth a swarm of plaguelings that quickly pick it up and carry it to its victims at rapid speed. Other demons may allow foes to close in on them and allow themselves to appear outnumbered. Only when the fiends start regurgitating swarms of revolting plaguelings, do their attackers release the grave miscalculation they've made.

PLAGUELING SWARM

Medium swarm of tiny fiends (demons of decay), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 68 (8d8 + 32)

Speed 40ft (20 ft. when it has half its hit points or less)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)

Saving Throws Con +6

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +5

Damage Resistances acid, cold, lightning, bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Damage Immunities poison, necrotic

Condition Immunities Charmed, Frightened, Grappled, Paralyzed, Petrified, Prone, Restrained, Stunned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Living Plague. The swarm is immune to diseases, and if it is targeted by a spell or effect that cures disease, such as Lay on Hands or *lesser restoration*, it takes 20 radiant damage.

Palanquin The swarm can be mounted by a Medium or smaller creature and counts as one size larger when determining its carrying capacity and the weight it can push, drag, or lift. It only costs a creature 5 feet of movement to mount or dismount the swarm.

Rolling Throng. The swarm loses 20 feet of movement when it has half of its hit points or fewer.

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny plagueling. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points. The swarm can also choose to have a creature dismount it at the start of its turn.

Actions

Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) piercing damage plus 14 (4d6) necrotic damage, or 3 (1d6) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer. If the target is a creature, the plagueling attaches to it. While attached, at the start of each of the plagueling's turns, the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become infected by Abyssal Rot (described in Disease Mechanics section). If the swarm has more than half its hit points, the target is also restrained while the swarm is attached to it.

The swarm can detach itself by spending 5 feet of its movement. A creature, including the target, can use its action to make DC 14 Strength check to detach the swarm. A creature has advantage on the check if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

Noxious Cradle. The swarm enters inside a willing creature that is Medium or larger and within 5 feet of it. While inside the creature, the swarm is blinded and has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the creature. A Medium creature can have only one swarm inside it at a time, and the creature can have an additional swarm inside for each size above Medium it is. The swarm can use 5 feet of movement to leave the creature and may have the creature mount it as it exits.

PLAGUELING TIDE

Huge swarm of tiny fiends (demons of decay), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 136 (13d12 + 52)

Speed 60ft (30 ft. when it is at half of its hit points or fewer)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)

Saving Throws Con +7

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +6

Damage Resistances acid, cold, lightning, bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Damage Immunities poison, necrotic

Condition Immunities Charmed, Frightened, Grappled, Paralyzed, Petrified, Prone, Restrained, Stunned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Living Plague. The swarm is immune to diseases, and if it is targeted by a spell or effect that cures disease, such as *Lay on Hands* or *lesser restoration*, it takes 20 radiant damage.

Palanquin The swarm can be mounted by a Huge or smaller creature and counts as one size larger when determining its carrying capacity and the weight it can push, drag, or lift. It only costs a creature 5 feet of movement to mount or dismount the swarm.

Rolling Throng. The swarm lose 30 feet of movement when it has half of its hit points or fewer.

Actions

Multiattack. The swarm makes two attacks or one attack if it has half of its hit points or fewer.

Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) piercing damage plus 14 (4d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 16). Until this grapple ends, at the start of each of the swarm's turns, the target must succeed on DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become infected by Abyssal Rot (described in Disease Mechanics section). If the swarm has more than half its hit points, the target is also restrained until the grapple ends.

Noxious Cradle. The swarm enters inside a willing creature that is Huge or larger and within 5 feet of it. While inside the creature, the swarm is blinded and has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the creature. A Huge creature can have only one swarm inside it at a time, and the creature can have an additional swarm inside for each size above Huge it is. The swarm can use 5 feet of movement to leave the creature and may have the creature mount it as it exits.

PLAGUELING ADVENTURE HOOKS

d6

Plot Hook

- 1 A man claims a small putrid demon erupted from his bowls and now stalks him and finds ways to ruin his life.
- 2 A hag runs a revolting "day care" where she tends to hordes of teeming plaguelings, preparing to release them into the world.
- 3 A town is racked with sickness which they blame their cursed well which periodically vomits forth swarms of plaguelings to terrify the townsfolk.
- 4 Demons of decay roam the roads between isolated villages. When they encounter travelers attempting to flee, they regurgitate hordes of plaguelings to use as mounts, quickly running down their new "friends" and imparting their infectious gifts.

ART CREDIT

- Blackcleave Goblin - Nils Hamm, Wizards of the Coast
- Flesh-Eater Imp - Johann Bodin, Wizards of the Coast
- Swamp - Paul Scott Canavan, Wizards of the Coast



PLAGUE TOADS

These wretched fiends appear as giant, mutant, disease-ridden toads with one or more boney horns protruding from their bulbous heads. Their rotting skin is always sloughing off of them and spreads terrible diseases to those who come in contact with it.

Plague toads spawn in the vilest swamps of the demon realms. There, they lazily waddle and hop about, looking for the next easy meal while avoiding the attention of more powerful demons. The desire to avoid the wrath of other demons while finding easy prey leads plague toads to leap at any chance to cross into the mortal realm. Here they take up residence in foul sewers and fetid swamps, feeding on humanoids at every opportunity while spreading filth and disease in their wake.

Demonic cultists of decay will often summon plague toads to serve as guardians in their lairs, and when other demons of decay launch large-scale attacks, they will often herd knots of plague toads into battle alongside them. Some plague bearer demons even catch plague toads for themselves and put them to use as combat mounts. Though they aren't the fastest of steeds, plague toads can leap over obstacles and ram foes with their boney horns, knocking prey off their feet before quickly gobbling them up.



PLAGUE TOAD

Large fiend (demon of decay), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 95 (10d10 + 40)

Speed 40 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Con +6

Damage Resistances acid, cold, lightning

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages understands Abyssal but can't speak

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Leap Attack. If the toad jumps at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a gore attack on the same turn, the target must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the toad can make a bite attack against it as a bonus action.

Living Plague. The toad is immune to diseases, and if it is targeted by a spell or effect that cures disease, such as Lay on Hands or lesser restoration, it takes 20 radiant damage.

Plague Secretion. A creature that starts its turn grappled by or grappling the toad must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become infected by Abyssal Rot (description in Disease Mechanics section).

Standing Leap. The toad's long jump is up to 40 feet. and its high jump is up to 20 ft., with or without a running start.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the toad can't use its bite attack or tongue attack on another target.

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Swallow. The toad makes a bite attack against a Medium or smaller creature it is grappling. If the attack hits, the target is swallowed, and the grapple ends. The swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the toad, and at the start of each of the toad's turns, it takes 10 (3d6) necrotic damage and is affected by the toad's Plague Secretion. The toad can have only one target swallowed at a time. If the toad dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 5 feet of movement, exiting prone.

Tongue. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) necrotic damage, and the target must make a DC 14 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, the target is pulled to a space within 5 feet of the toad, which can immediately use its bonus action to make a bite attack against the target.

PLAGUE TOAD, BOG BARON

Large fiend (demon of decay), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 105 (10d10 + 50)

Speed 40 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Con +8

Damage Resistances acid, cold, lightning

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages understands Abyssal but can't speak

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Leap Attack. If the toad jumps at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a gore attack on the same turn, the target must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the toad can make a bite attack against it as a bonus action.

Miasma of Rot. The toad emits a toxic cloud which extends 5 feet out from it. Any creature that starts its turn in that area must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or become infected with Wasting Sickness disease. While infected with the disease, a creature has disadvantage on Strength checks and saving throws. An infected creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of a short or long rest, ending the disease on a success and becoming immune to the Wasting Sickness of all bog barons for the next 24 hours.

Bog Barons. Though all plague toads are bloated bags of disease, these toads have been blessed with a particularly potent disease that radiates from the toad's rotting skin in a vile miasma. This disease is commonly referred to as "wasting sickness" and withers away the muscle mass of its victims, eventually weakening them to the point where they can no longer breathe or beat their heart.

Carrying this disease marks these plague toads with a higher status in their swamp homes, thus earning them the nickname of bog barons. Plague bearers see the bog barons as particularly valuable mounts, and those who have successfully captured them will form elite gangs of fetid shock cavalry.

PLAGUE TOADS IN YOUR ADVENTURES

The following table provides some adventure hooks for incorporating plague toads into your adventures. Example encounters with battle maps for the hooks written in bold can be found in the *Demons of Decay Creature Guide* available to members of our Patreon.

Living Plague. The toad is immune to diseases, and if it is targeted by a spell or effect that cures disease, such as *Lay on Hands* or *lesser restoration*, it takes 20 radiant damage.

Standing Leap. The toad's long jump is up to 40 feet and its high jump is up to 20 ft., with or without a running start.

Actions

Tongue. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (5d6) necrotic damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, the target is pulled to a space within 5 feet of the toad, which can immediately use its bonus action to make a bite attack against the target.

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 18 (3d8 + 5) piercing damage.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (3d10 + 5) piercing damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 16). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the toad can't use its bite attack or tongue attack on another target.

Swallow. The toad makes a bite attack against a Medium or smaller creature it is grappling. If the attack hits, the target is swallowed, and the grapple ends. The swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the toad, and at the start of each of the toad's turns, its Strength score is reduced by 1d6 and is affected by the toad's Miasma of Rot. The target dies if this reduces its Strength to 0. Otherwise, the reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest. The toad can have only one target swallowed at a time. If the toad dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 5 feet of movement, exiting prone.

PLAGUE TOAD ADVENTURES

d4

Adventure Hook

A raving halfling rants to anyone who listens about how 1 fiendish waste is being dumped into the ponds and turning the frogs into demons.

The players come into conflict with a cult worshipping 2 a demon lord of decay. Those who displease their master are warped into plague toads.

While traveling through a treacherous swamp, the players 3 find themselves hunted by a gang of plague bearers riding plague toads.

A raiding party of plague riders mounted on plague 4 toads spills out of the sewers of a major city, spreading disease and chaos in preparation for a larger assault.

ART CREDIT

- Grolnok, the Omnivore - Simon Dominic, Wizards of the Coast

BEASTS OF DECAY

These disgusting and ungainly fiends lurch across the ground with their slug-like bodies, bringing rot and death to everyone in their path. The beast's legless lower body is topped with a vaguely humanoid upper body, and its head features a slobbering tongue and leech-like hair that constantly spews toxins. Though their bodies appear bloated and awkward, beasts of decay have no trouble pulling themselves toward any creature that catches their attention, leaving a trail of acidic slime in their wake.

Despite the beast of decay's horrid appearance and deadly nature, it is a jovial and affectionate fiend, virtually incapable of viewing any other creature as an enemy. "Enemies" are simply potential playmates, and the beast is eager to earn their affection with big slobbering licks. The fact that these licks rot, kill, and bring untold suffering to their "playmates" is beyond the beast's understanding. A creature killed this way is transformed into another demon of decay, thus providing the beast with a more permanent playmate.



BEAST OF DECAY

Large fiend (demon of decay), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 136 (13d10+65)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +8, Wis +6

Skills Perception +6

Damage Resistances cold, lightning

Damage Immunities acid, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages understands Abyssal but can't speak it.

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Living Plague. The beast is immune to diseases, and if it is targeted by a spell or effect that cures disease, such as *Lay on Hands* or *lesser restoration*, it takes 20 radiant damage.

Regeneration. The beast regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If it takes fire or radiant damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of its next turn.

The beast dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Slime Trail. Any land the beast occupies is covered in slime for the next minute, causing it to become difficult terrain for one minute.

When a creature moves into or within the area, it takes 2 (1d4) acid damage for every 5 feet it travels. A creature that enters the area or ends its turn there must also succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone and take 7 (3d4) acid damage. Demons of decay ignore the effects of the slime.

Bonus Actions

Attention Seeker. The beast moves up to its speed in a straight line toward any creature it can see.

Actions

Erratic Attack. The beast does one of the following actions at random:

1-2. **Wagging Tail.** The beast makes a tail attack. This attack has the following properties:

Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 10ft., one target. **Hit:** 36 (5d12 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be pushed 10 feet away and knocked prone.

3-4. **Slobber.** The beast makes three Tongue attacks. If at least two of the attacks hit the same creature, that creature must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or become infected by Abyssal Rot (described in Disease Mechanics section).

5-6. **Spit Up.** The beast regurgitates acid in a 30-foot long, 10-foot wide line, subjecting any space in the area to the effects of its Slime Trail feature. Each creature in that area must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, taking 15 (6d4) acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Tongue. **Melee Weapon Attack:** +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 16 (3d10) necrotic damage.



ROT FLIES

These malevolent fiends possess a cruelty counter to the usual jovial nature of most demons of decay. These demons resemble giant flies the size of horses and possess bladed arms and massive stingers capable of delivering enormous dosages of venom. But the most disturbing of all the rot fly's weapons is its deadly proboscis, capable of dissolving flesh and devouring its victim's head. The heads devoured this way are digested down to their skulls, which are transformed into fiendish grenade-like weapons known as death's heads. The rot flies expel these death's heads which are used by other demons of decay to slay masses of foes.

ROT FLY

Large fiend (demon of decay), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 104 (11d10 + 44)

Speed 10 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Con +7

Damage Resistances acid, cold, lightning

Damage Immunities poison, necrotic

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages understands Abyssal but can't speak

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Living Plague. The rot fly is immune to diseases, and if it is targeted by a spell or effect that cures disease, such as Lay on Hands or *lesser restoration*, it takes 20 radiant damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The rot fly makes two attacks with its blade legs.

Blade Legs. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d10 + 4) slashing damage.

Proboscis. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d10 + 4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) acid damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature and the attack was made with advantage, the rot fly attaches to the target's head (assuming it has one). While the rot fly is attached, the creature is restrained, blinded, unable to breathe or speak, and can't cast spells with verbal components.

At the start of each of the rot fly's turns, any creature it is attached to takes 21 (6d6) acid damage and must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become infected by Abyssal Rot (description in Disease Mechanics section).

The rot fly can't use its proboscis on another creature while attached. The rot fly can detach itself by spending 5 feet of its movement. A creature, including the target, can use its action to detach the rot fly by succeeding on a DC 15 Strength check. Only one rot fly can be attached to a creature at a time (unless it has multiple heads).

Stinger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d10 + 4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If it fails the repeated saving throw by 5 or more (DC 10), it is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.



It is said that rot flies were once beasts of decay that were repeatedly slain in the mortal realm by those they tried to share their deadly affection with. The beasts of decay sought out new mortal friends but were cut down by these would-be companions. Bitterness grew in the hearts of the beasts, and when they reformed on their demonic home plain, that bitterness warped them into rot flies. Rot flies that make their way into the Material Plane are said to seek the mortals who previously slew them and prioritize exacting vengeance at all costs unless they are being controlled by a powerfully strong-willed master.

Plague bearers who have such a will may use rot flies as mounts. These plague bearers are known as plague drones and are notorious for raining down death's head bombs on their foes before swooping in with their deadly rot flies to pick off stragglers.

BEASTS OF DECAY & ROT FLIES IN YOUR ADVENTURES

The following table provides some adventure hooks for incorporating beasts of decay and rot flies into your adventures.

BEAST OF DECAY & ROT FLY ADVENTURES
d12 Plot Hook

- 1 A mad cultist takes her pet beast of decay out on walks in the dead of night. Anyone who crosses their path is subject to its deadly affection.
- 2 A beast of decay has taken residence near a local pond, playing in the now polluted water and killing all nearby wildlife in the process.
- 3 A pack of beasts of decay has begun roaming the sewers of a major city, surfacing in the night to find new playmates.
- 4 A beast of decay has taken a liking to a party member, who it now follows and regards as its best friend.

- 5 An old lady asks the party to find her lost puppy in the woods. If they find the "puppy," they discover that it's a beast of decay.
- 6 A greater demon has unleashed a pack of beasts of decay to play in a now panic-stricken town as it prepares for a larger invasion.
- 7 A pack of beasts of decay the players slew before have returned as rot flies seeking revenge
- 8 Veterans who fought against demons of decay years ago are being hunted down by vengeful rot flies.
- 9 The players are delving into a rotting mansion on the fiendish home plane of the demons of decay but encounter a patrol squad of plague bearers atop rot flies.
- 10 A raiding party of plague bearers atop rot flies is raiding a countryside and harvesting death's heads on behalf of a demonic master.
- 11 The players have been charged with clearing out a giant nest that is home to several rot flies and has developed a primitive but malevolent sentience.
- 12 A wizard experimenting with abyssal transmutation magic finds himself slowly morphing into a rot fly.

ART CREDIT

- Blind Creeper - Dave Allsop, Wizards of the Coast
- Battlefly Swarm - Xavier Ribeiro, Wizards of the Coast
- Carrion Locust - Nino Is, Wizards of the Coast



GREAT UNCLEAN ONES

These jolly greater demons are masters of rot and disease, which they happily spread to anyone they meet. They have the appearance of massive, bloated corpses with entrails spilling forth from their open wounds and slimy horns topping their grinning, oversized heads. This enormous body constantly oozes acidic slime and debilitating gasses, and its rotting girth makes it difficult to meaningfully damage. Once it is in motion, the unclean one can easily crush other creatures under the momentum of its vile flesh, all while laughing merrily.

Unclean ones wield rusted and decaying weapons, crusted with filth and disease, and their dreaded blades deliver an affliction that can transform victims into new demons of decay. Enemies outside the reach of an unclean one's weapons are no safer, for these fiends can vomit streams of rotting bile over ridiculous distances. These deadly combat abilities are supplemented by the unclean one's powerfully putrescent magic, which specializes in rotting and poisoning enemies as well as restoring vitality to its fellow demons.

While an unclean one's presence inevitably brings death and decay, it behaves as though it is at a grand party. There is a joyousness to its actions, and its diseases, spells, and attacks are simply how it spreads good cheer. The unclean one has a parental fondness for its followers, and those who have given themselves over to the influence of these demons view their afflictions as loving presents. Together they spread their pestilent gifts far and wide as they revel in the decay of all things.

The grandest and most accomplished of unclean ones are sometimes elevated to the status of exalted unclean ones. This is a rare occurrence for the unclean one must prove itself to be an unparalleled master of spreading pestilence and good cheer in equal measure before it has any chance of ascending to this level. Those who prove worthy become among the most powerful demons of decay in existence, leading legions of their foul brethren, spreading plagues beyond counting, and hosting pestilent festivals of legendary status.

GREAT UNCLEAN ONE

Huge fiend (demon of decay), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 364 (27d12 + 189)

Speed 50ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	10 (+0)	25 (+7)	22 (+6)	25 (+7)	22 (+6)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Con +13, Wis +13, Int +12

Skills Athletics +11, Arcana +12, Insight +19, Nature +18, Perception +19, Persuasion +12, Religion +12

Damage Resistances cold, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities acid, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities paralyzed, poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., darkvision 300 ft., passive Perception 29

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 300 ft.

Challenge 17 (18,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +6

Corrupt Mass. The unclean one regains 20 hit points at the start of its turn. If it takes 20 or more fire or radiant damage in a single turn, this trait doesn't function at the start of its next turn. The unclean one dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Living Plague. The unclean one is immune to diseases, and if it is targeted by a spell or effect that cures disease, such as Lay on Hands or *lesser restoration*, it takes 20 radiant damage.

Noxious Vapors. Any creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of the unclean one must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. While poisoned in this way, the creature's speed is halved and it is dazed. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the Noxious Vapors of all demons of decay for 1 hour.

Slime Trail. Any land the unclean one, or a demon of decay it is mounted on, occupies is covered in slime for the next minute, causing it to become difficult terrain for one minute. When a creature moves into or within the area, it takes 2 (1d4) acid damage for every 5 feet it travels. A creature that enters the area or ends its turn there must also succeed on a DC 21 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone and take 7 (3d4) acid damage. Demons of decay ignore the effects of the slime.

Actions

Multiattack. The unclean one makes two attacks. Alternatively, it makes one attack and casts one at-will spell.

Bilesword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (3d10 + 5) slashing damage plus 22 (5d8) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw or become infected by Abyssal Rot (described in Disease Mechanics section).

Noxious Bile. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, range 120/240ft., one target. *Hit:* 27 (5d8 + 5) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw or become infected by Abyssal Rot (described in Disease Mechanics section).

Mountain of Loathsome Flesh. The unclean one moves up to 50 feet in a straight line and can move through the space of any Large or smaller creature. The first time it enters a creature's space during this move, that creature must make a DC 21 Strength saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 18 (3d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage and is knocked prone. On a success, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't knocked prone. The unclean one can't end its movement in another creature's space.

Spellcasting. The unclean one casts one of the following spells, requiring no components and using Wisdom as its spellcasting ability (spell save DC 21, +13 to hit with spell attacks):

At will: *cloudkill, dispel magic, locate creature, rancid visitation**

1/day each: *finger of death* (A creature killed by this spell becomes a **plague bearer of decay**), *heal*, *horrid wilting*

**New spell found in Spells of Decay section*

Reactions

Blubber and Bile When the unclean one takes damage, it halves the damage and then reduces it by 1d12.

EXALTED UNCLEAN ONE

Huge fiend (demon of decay), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 432 (32d12 + 224)

Speed 50ft.

STR **DEX** **CON** **INT** **WIS** **CHA**

20 (+5) 10 (+0) 25 (+7) 22 (+6) 25 (+7) 22 (+6)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Con +13, Wis +13, Int +12

Skills Athletics +11, Arcana +12, Insight +19, Nature +18, Perception +19, Persuasion +12, Religion +12

Damage Resistances cold, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities acid, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities paralyzed, poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., darkvision 300 ft., passive Perception 29

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 300 ft.

Challenge 20 (25,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +6

Corpulent Mass. The unclean one regains 20 hit points at the start of its turn. If it takes 20 or more fire or radiant damage in a single turn, this trait doesn't function at the start of its next turn. The unclean one dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Living Plague. The unclean one is immune to diseases, and if it is targeted by a spell or effect that cures disease, such as Lay on Hands or *lesser restoration*, it takes 20 radiant damage.

Noxious Vapors. Any creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of the unclean one must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. While poisoned in this way, the creature's speed is halved and it is dazed. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the Noxious Vapors of all demons of decay for 1 hour.

Slime Trail. Any land the unclean one, or a demon of decay it is mounted on, occupies is covered in slime for the next minute, causing it to become difficult terrain for one minute. When a creature moves into or within the area, it takes 2 (1d4) acid damage for every 5 feet it travels. A creature that enters the area or ends its turn there must also succeed on a DC 21 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone and take 7 (3d4) acid damage. Demons of decay ignore the effects of the slime.

Actions

Multiattack. The unclean one makes two attacks. Alternatively, it makes one attack and casts one at-will spell.

Bilesword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (3d10 + 5) slashing damage plus 22 (5d8) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw or become infected by Abyssal Rot (described in Disease Mechanics section).

Noxious Bile. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, range 120/240ft., one target. *Hit:* 27 (5d8 + 5) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw or become infected by Abyssal Rot (described in Disease Mechanics section).

Mountain of Loathsome Flesh. The unclean one moves up to 50 feet in a straight line and can move through the space of any Large or smaller creature. The first time it enters a creature's space during this move, that creature must make a DC 21 Strength saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 18 (3d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage and is knocked prone. On a success, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't knocked prone. The unclean one can't end its movement in another creature's space.

Spellcasting. The unclean one casts one of the following spells, requiring no components and using Wisdom as its spellcasting ability (spell save DC 21, +13 to hit with spell attacks):

At will: *cloudkill, contagion, dispel magic, locate creature, rancid visitation**

1/day each: *finger of death* (A creature killed by this spell becomes a **plaguebearer of decay**), *heal, horrid wilting*

**New spells found in Spells of Decay section*

Reactions

Blubber and Bile When the unclean one takes damage, it halves the damage and then reduces it by 1d12.

Legendary Actions

The unclean one can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The unclean one regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Check. The unclean one makes a skill check that would normally require an action.

Move. The unclean one moves up to 30 feet without provoking attacks of opportunity. It does not spread its slime trail while moving this way.

Tenacious Will. If the monster is suffering from an effect that allows it to make a saving throw as an action or at the beginning or end of its next turn, it may immediately make that save against the effect with advantage. It can use this legendary action while incapacitated.

Virulent Contagion. The unclean one casts *contagion*, and the spell attack has a reach of 30 feet when it is cast this way. If the spell hits, it deals 16 (3d10) poison damage in addition to the spell's other effects.

Pestilent Decay (Costs 2 Actions). Each creature within 300 feet of the unclean one infected by the *contagion* spell must make a DC 21 Constitution saving throw. A failed save against this ability counts as a failed save against the creature's ongoing disease. If the creature is already suffering the full effects of the spell, it takes 36 (8d8) necrotic damage instead.

DEMONIC GIFTS

You can choose any two of the following features to add to the stat block of the great unclean one or exalted unclean one. The default stat blocks have Slime Trail and Noxious Vapors.

1. **Slime Trail** Any land the unclean one, or a demon of decay it is mounted on, occupies is covered in slime for the next minute, causing it to become difficult terrain for one minute. When a creature moves into or within the area, it takes 2 (1d4) acid damage for every 5 feet it travels. A creature that enters the area or ends its turn there must also succeed on a DC 21 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone and take 7 (3d4) acid damage. Demons of decay ignore the effects of the slime.
2. **Noxious Vapors.** Any creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of the unclean one must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. While poisoned in this way, the creature's speed is halved and it is dazed. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the Noxious Vapors of all demons of decay for 1 hour.
3. **Infestation.** At the start of each of the unclean one's turns, it heals a plagueling swarm or plagueling tide of its choice within 10 feet of it for 34 hit points. This healing ignores the swarm rule regarding healing. If there are no such swarms within 10 feet of the unclean one below full health, it instead creates a plagueling swarm with 17 hit points inside itself as though the swarm used its **Noxious Cradle** ability to enter inside the unclean one. The new swarm has its own initiative and takes its turn right after the unclean one. The unclean one can have up to three swarms created by this ability at a time.
4. **Bloated Pustules.** The first time each turn that the unclean one is hit with an attack, puss spews out in a 15-foot cube originating from the unclean one in the direction of the attacker. Each creature in the area of the cube takes 9 (2d8) necrotic damage.

UNCLE CRUNCLE

This demon is particularly unusual, even for an unclean one. Cruncle refers to himself as everyone's uncle and is always in search of anyone to share his stories, knickknacks, and weird humor with. He would say he oozes charm, but it's mostly noxious bodily fluids. Any time he finds a new audience, Uncle Cruncle rushes to greet them with awkward jokes and strange gifts no one in their right mind would want. These gifts are random curiosities he acquires during his journeys and stores in places better left unmentioned. Those who reject Cruncle's gifts and attempts at entertainment tend to find themselves on the receiving end of his latest knickknack.

Uncle Cruncle's favorite gift is his own personal contagion he's dubbed Uncle's Bloat. It subjects its recipients to a painful form of gigantism, expanding their size and leaving them horribly gassy. This condition makes it much easier to subject his audience to the bodily fluids he leaves wherever he goes.



HEY MORTAL, PULL MY FINGER!

- UNCLE CRUNCLE

Cruncle always finds new ways to subject others to his bodily functions, from his classic "sick shooter" to his latest trick, dubbed "The Chocolate Fountain." Never one to horde his abilities, Cruncle can spread the joy by inducing these same performances in others, thus covering huge areas in vile fluids. As these fluids rot away other creatures, they sustain and rejuvenate Cruncle, turning him into an unceasing mass of contagions, bodily functions, and insufferable jokes.

UNCLEAN ONE ADVENTURES

d6

Plot Hook

- 1 A town has fallen into disrepair as its citizens suffer from a series of plagues, all heralding the arrival of an unclean one.
- 2 An unclean one has corrupted a circle of druids and now uses them to unleash nature's virulent gifts upon civilization.
- 3 A decaying city slowly sinks into a swamp, its remaining citizens succumbing to diseases as an unclean one leads a pestilent parade of the damned through its crumbling streets.
- 4 An unclean one has emerged from a fetid swamp, leading a horde of demons of decay on a merry march as they spread rot and disease throughout the land.
- 5 Uncle Cruncle has his demonic minions capture travelers to take back to his lair, where they slowly die from exposure to disease and cringy humor.
- 6 An unclean one is collecting the corpses of those who have perished to his exotic diseases to create his own rot garden.

ART CREDIT

- Ravenous Rotbelly - Nils Hamm, Wizards of the Coast
- Gluetius Maximus - Jeff Easley, Wizards of the Coast

UNCLE CRUNCLE

Huge fiend (demon of decay), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 405 (30d12 + 210)

Speed 50ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	10 (+0)	25 (+7)	22 (+6)	25 (+7)	22 (+6)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +14, Wis +14, Int +13

Skills Athletics +12, Arcana +13, Insight +21, Nature +20, Perception +21, Persuasion +13, Religion +13

Damage Resistances cold, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities acid, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities paralyzed, poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., darkvision 300 ft., passive Perception 31

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 300 ft.

Challenge 22 (41,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +7

Corpulent Mass. Cruncle regains 20 hit points at the start of his turn. If he takes 20 or more fire or radiant damage in a single turn, this trait doesn't function at the start of his next turn. Cruncle dies only if he starts his turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Defiling Deluge. Any land Cruncle occupies is covered in rot for the next minute, causing it to become difficult terrain for one minute. When a creature moves into or within the area, it takes 3 (1d6) necrotic damage for every 5 feet it travels. A creature that enters the area or ends its turn there must also succeed on a DC 22 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone and take 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. Whenever the rot damages a creature, Cruncle regains hit points equal to the amount of necrotic damage dealt. Demons of decay ignore the effects of the rot.

Living Plague. Cruncle is immune to diseases, and if he is targeted by a spell or effect that cures disease, such as Lay on Hands or lesser restoration, he takes 20 radiant damage.

Actions

Multiattack. Cruncle makes two attacks. Alternatively, he makes one attack and casts one at-will spell.

Uncle Cruncle's Knickknack Whack. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (3d10 + 5) bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage (Cruncle's choice) plus 22 (5d8) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 22 Constitution saving throw or become infected by Uncle's Bloat disease. While infected, the creature's size is increased by one category, it has disadvantage on Dexterity checks and Dexterity saving throws, and it loses any flying or climbing speed it has.

Noxious Bile. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, range 120/240ft., one target. *Hit:* 27 (5d8 + 5) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 22 Constitution saving throw or become infected by the Uncle's Bloat disease (described in Uncle Cruncle's Knickknack Whack attack).

Mountain of Loathsome Flesh. Cruncle moves up to 50 feet in a straight line and can move through the space of any Large or smaller creature. The first time he enters a creature's space during this move, that creature must make a DC 22 Strength saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 18 (3d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage and is knocked prone. On a success, a creature takes half the damage and isn't knocked prone. Cruncle can't end his movement in another creature's space.

Spellcasting. Cruncle casts one of the following spells, requiring no components and using Wisdom as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 22, +14 to hit with spell attacks):

At will: *cloudkill, dispel magic, locate creature, spirit leech (5th level)**

1/day each: *finger of death* (A creature killed by this spell becomes a **plague bearer of decay**), *heal, horrid wilting*

**New spells found in Spells of Decay section*

Reactions

Blubber and Bile When Cruncle takes damage, he halves the damage and then reduces it by 1d12.

Legendary Actions

Cruncle can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Cruncle regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

Check. Cruncle makes a skill check that would normally require an action.

Gut Check. A creature of Cruncle's choice within 5 feet of him must succeed on a DC 22 Strength saving throw or take 22 (5d8) bludgeoning damage and be pushed up to 20 feet away from Cruncle.

Move. Cruncle moves up to 30 feet without provoking attacks of opportunity. He does not spread his Defiling Deluge while moving this way.

Spew Poo Party. Cruncle chooses himself or a creature he is aware of with 120 feet of him infected with Uncle's Bloat that just took its turn. The chosen creature lets loose a flood of noxious liquid, causing any surfaces within 10 feet of it to be subjected to the effects of Defiling Deluge.

Tenacious Will. If Cruncle is suffering from an effect that allows him to make a saving throw as an action or at the beginning or end of his next turn, he may immediately make that save against the effect with advantage. He can use this legendary action while incapacitated.



THE PLAGUEFATHER

The mightiest of all the unclean ones and the single most powerful demon of decay in existence is known as the Plaguefather. His rotting girth puts that of other unclean ones to shame, and he is usually seen carried upon a massive palanquin by writhing hordes of plaguelings.

The Plaguefather is unique among other unclean ones as he focuses not only on spreading existing plagues but also on concocting new ones to unleash upon the world. He toils away at his massive cauldron, brewing and concocting new experimental diseases to unleash upon the world. The Plaguefather takes every chance he can to roam the Material Plane in search of specimens to use in his experiments and to test his diseases against any hapless mortals he encounters. He has a special interest in crafting plagues to infect those normally immune to disease and dreams of one day creating a contagion capable of infecting the gods.

In combat, The Plaguefather possesses ungodly resilience, tremendous strength, and swarms of plagueling attendants. The most dangerous of these plaguelings are those he keeps with him at all times to use as carriers for his latest experimental diseases. At a moment's notice, The Plaguefather can pull a plagueling from his bowls, dunk it in a vial of disease, and hurl it at his foes. When the plagueling lands, it explodes in a noxious burst, infecting those in the blast radius with the plaguefather's latest concoction.

THE PLAGUEFATHER'S LAIR

The Plaguefather's home serves as a garden to grow choice ingredients and a laboratory to host his twisted experiments. It is filled with living things laden with rot and forever on the brink of death. This lair is normally on his demonic home plane, but he may establish a lair in a location on the Material Plane where he wishes to conduct extended experiments.

LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the plaguefather can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects, even while incapacitated; he can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- The plaguefather chooses two creatures infected with his experimental diseases that he is aware of in his layer. He chooses one that must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, it gains all the symptoms of the other creature.
- The plaguefather chooses a creature within his layer that he is aware of in his layer and forces it to make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, it is infected with an experimental disease with a random symptom determined by the Experimental Disease Table on the page after the next.
- The plaguefather chooses one plagueling swarm he is aware of in his layer and causes them to begin bloating and expanding. At the end of the plagueling swarm's next turn, it explodes and dies. Each creature within 15 feet of the plagueling swarm must make a DC 19 Dexterity saving throw, taking acid damage equal to the hit points the swarm had when it died on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

ART CREDIT

- Zombie Ogre - Nicholas Gregory, Wizards of the Coast

THE PLAGUEFATHER

Huge fiend (demon of decay), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 434 (28d12 + 252)

Speed 40ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	10 (+0)	28 (+9)	24 (+7)	25 (+7)	22 (+6)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +16, Wis +14, Int +14

Skills Athletics +13, Arcana +14, Insight +21, Investigation +21, Nature +21, Perception +21, Religion +14

Damage Resistances cold, lightning, bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities acid, poison, necrotic

Condition Immunities poisoned, paralyzed.

Senses truesight 120 ft., darkvision 300 ft., passive Perception 31

Languages Abyssal, telepathy 300 ft.

Challenge 24 (62,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +7

Living Plague. The plaguefather is immune to diseases, and if he is targeted by a spell or effect that cures disease, such as *Lay on Hands* or *lesser restoration*, he takes 20 radiant damage.

Corpulent Mass. The plaguefather regains 20 hit points at the start of his turn. If he takes 20 or more fire or radiant damage in a single turn, this trait doesn't function at the start of his next turn. The plaguefather dies only if he starts his turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Infestation. At the start of each of the plaguefather's turns, he heals a plagueling swarm or plagueling tide of his choice within 10 feet of him for 64 hit points. This healing ignores the swarm rule regarding healing. If there are no such swarms within 10 feet of the plaguefather below full health, he instead creates a plagueling swarm with 34 hit points inside himself as though the swarm used its **Noxious Cradle** ability to enter inside the plaguefather. The new swarm has its own initiative and takes its turn right after the plaguefather. The plaguefather can have up to three swarms created by this ability at a time.

Slime Trail. Any land the plaguefather, or a demon of decay he is mounted on, occupies is covered in slime for the next minute, causing it to become difficult terrain for one minute. When a creature moves into or within the area, it takes 2 (1d4) acid damage for every 5 feet it travels. A creature that enters the area or ends its turn there must also succeed on a DC 21 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone and take 7 (3d4) acid damage. Demons of decay ignore the effects of the slime.

Actions

Multiattack. The plaguefather makes two attacks. He can use a Necrotic Missile in place of one of his attacks.

Slam *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10ft., one target. *Hit:* 33 (5d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Necrotic Missile. The plaguefather hurls an explosive plagueling at a point he can see within 300 feet that is not behind total cover.

The plagueling detonates at this point, and each creature within 15 feet of it that's not behind total cover must make a DC 22 Constitution saving throw. On failure, a creature takes 40 (9d8) necrotic damage and becomes infected with an experimental disease with a symptom determined using the Experimental Disease Table on the next page. All creatures that fail the save are infected with the same disease.

On a success, a creature takes half damage and isn't infected.

When the plaguefather uses this action, creatures can use their reaction to make attacks of opportunity against him as though he moved out of their reach. If a creature hits him this way, he drops the plagueling, and it detonates centered on his location.

Reactions

Blubber and Bile. When the plaguefather takes damage, he halves the damage and then reduces it by 1d12.

Legendary Actions

The plaguefather can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The plaguefather regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

Check. The plaguefather makes a skill check that would normally require an action.

Conglomerate. Two plagueling swarms the plaguefather is aware of that have all their hit points and are within 5 feet of each other merge and become a plagueling tide. The plagueling tide has its own initiative and goes right after the plaguefather. If either of the plagueling swarms were attached to any creatures, those creatures are now grappled by the plagueling tide as though they've been hit by its bite attack. The plaguefather can only have one plagueling tide created this way at a time.

Summon Plaguelings. The plaguefather targets a non-swarm creature within 300 feet that just ended its turn, causing a plagueling swarm with 34 hit points to appear centered on its location. If there is already a plagueling swarm or tide in that creature's space, that swarm gains 34 hit points instead, and the creature that just ended its turn must succeed on a DC 22 Dexterity saving throw or be automatically hit by a bite attack from the swarm (no action required.)

Swarm Surge. A plagueling tide or swarm within 120 feet of the plaguefather moves up to its movement.

Tenacious Will. If the plaguefather is suffering from an effect that allows him to make a saving throw as an action or at the beginning or end of his next turn, he may immediately make that save against the effect with advantage. He can use this legendary action while incapacitated.

EXPERIMENTAL DISEASES

When a creature is subjected to an experimental disease, roll on the following table to determine the disease's symptoms. If the creature is already suffering from an experimental disease, the resulting symptom is added to its existing infection. All diseases inflicted this way end when the plaguefather dies.

Creatures normally immune to disease can still be infected with these diseases but have advantage on their saves against infection.

EXPERIMENTAL DISEASE TABLE

d20	Disease Symptom
1	The creature takes 22 (4d10) necrotic damage at the start of each of its turns.
2	The creature is poisoned.
3	The creature can't take reactions.
4	The creature can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.
5	All attacks against the creature are made with advantage.
6	The creature is unable to see anything farther than 10 feet away.
7	Damage dealt by creature's attacks is halved.
8	The creature's speed is halved.
9	The creature is frightened of the plaguefather
10	If the creature casts a spell that causes itself or another creature to regain hit points or gain temporary hit points, the target gains half that may temporary hit points or hit points instead.
11	The creature can't make more than one attack during its turn.
12	Attack rolls can't gain disadvantage against the creature.
13	On the creature's turn, it must choose whether it gets a move or an action; it can't do both.
14	At the start of each of the creature's turns, it loses any concentration it's maintaining.
15	The creature can't gain advantage on attack rolls or ability checks.
16	The creature becomes brittle. While a creature is brittle, any attack that hits it is a critical hit.
17	If the creature attempts to cast a spell with a casting time of 1 action, roll a d20. On an 11 or higher, the spell doesn't take effect until the creature's next turn, and the creature must use its action on that turn to complete the spell. If it can't, the spell is wasted.
18	The creature falls prone at the start of each of its turns and must use all of its movement to stand up.
19	The creature is charmed by the plaguefather.
20	Demons of decay have advantage on saving throws against any spells the creature casts.

EPIC PLAGUEFATHER BATTLE

If you wish to make the plaguefather into a true threat worthy of providing the final battle to a campaign, you can double his maximum hit points, bringing the total up to 868, and give him the following trait:

Perfected Plague (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).

If the plaguefather is reduced to half his hit points (434) or less, he may end any spells affecting him. Additionally, he chooses one symptom from the Experimental Disease Table.

Any time a creature becomes infected by an experimental disease by him or from his lair actions, it gains the chosen symptom in addition to other symptoms the disease would inflict.

This ability lasts until the plaguefather completes a short or long rest.

THE PLAGUEFATHER'S MAGIC

While the plaguefather is an unclean one, and all unclean ones have innate spellcasting abilities, those were not included in the stat block. The plaguefather's spell casting ability was removed to keep the stat block from becoming too large and because he will generally be better off relying on his necrotic missiles than spells. But, if you wish to keep his abilities consistent and give him the option to use magic, you can give him the following spellcasting action.

Spellcasting. The plague father casts one of the following spells, requiring no components and using Wisdom as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 22, +14 to hit with spell attacks):

At will: *cloudkill, dispel magic, locate creature, rancid visitation**

1/day each: *finger of death* (A creature killed by this spell becomes a **plague bearer of decay**), *heal, horrid wilting*

**New spells found in Spells of Decay section*

PLAGUEFATHER ADVENTURES

d4 Adventure Hook

- 1 A dwarven hold under siege by the plaguefather's forces seeks the players' aid in ending the assault.
- 2 The players discover the location of the plaguefather's lair, where he is brewing his next epidemic.
- 3 The plaguefather's latest epidemic is sweeping the land, and he now marches upon a temple of healers to prevent them from creating a cure.
- 4 Tales are spreading of the plaguefather roaming the land and "collecting" people along the way to use as ingredients and test subjects for his latest creation.

CHANGE LOG

1.0.0

- Document release