Patreon
Diseases

Additional Disease Options

The life of an adventurer requires delving into many dangerous and decrepit places. The vicious traps and vile monsters found in these locations are but a few of the dangers they offer, as the decay, rot, and disease endemic to these areas can be an equal or even greater hazard to the well-being of those that venture within.

Included in this supplement are additional diseases, intended to add on to the rules present on pages 256-257 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. As with the diseases listed there, your DM may decide to modify these diseases as they see fit, changing DCs, the nature of infection, damage caused, or any other detail to better suit the purposes of their campaign.

Disease and Treatment

Creatures with proficiency in Medicine may attempt to diagnose or treat a creature suffering from a disease. The DCs listed with each disease denote the DC required for a Wisdom (Medicine) check to diagnose the disease. After a disease is diagnosed, a separate Wisdom (Medicine) check may be made to treat the disease. This check to treat the disease may only be repeated once after every long rest.

If the check to treat the disease is successful, the creature suffering from the disease has advantage on the next saving throw it makes to recover from the disease. If the check to treat the disease is unsuccessful and the disease is spread by contact or damage, the creature making the medicine check may be required to make a saving throw against contracting the disease themselves.

Diseases

Disease	Infection on..	DC to Succumb	Incubation Time	DC to Diagnose	DC to Treat
Acid Rash	Damage	14	1d4 days	12	15
Blue Guts	Special	13	1d4 days	12	16
Deathsong	Contact	15	1 day	10	—
Faceless Hate	Special	11	Special	15	—
Iron Corruption	Damage	12	Immediate	10	—
Life Blindness	Inhaled	13	1 day	10	—
Soulwrack	Special	12 (Charisma)	Immediate	14	—
Sticky Fingers	Contact	14	1d6 days	12	18
Vile Rigidity	Inhaled	13	1 day	13	—

Acid Rash

When a creature suffers a grievous wound from acid damage (typically 30 hit points or greater), they have a chance of contracting acid rash. A creature subjected to such a wound must roll a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. If they fail they succumb to acid rash, and within 1d4 days the skin around the wound blackens, and a series of festering yellow-green boils erupt along the victim's flesh.

A creature suffering from acid rash has disadvantage on all Strength checks, saving throws, and attacks. At the end of a short rest, a creature with acid rash takes 1d8 acid damage, which may not be reduced or ignored in any way.

If a creature with acid rash takes damage some of their boils burst explosively, and all creatures within 10 feet of the afflicted creature must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. Each creature that fails this saving throw takes 1d8 acid damage and is infected with acid rash. A creature that succeeds on this save automatically succeeds on all saves against contracting acid rash for the next 24 hours.

At the end of a long rest, a creature with acid rash rolls a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. If successful, the DC of this save drops by 1d8. If this save fails, the creature takes 2d8 acid damage which may not be reduced or ignored in any way. If the DC of this save drops to 0, the creature recovers.

Blue Guts

Eating meat from particularly strange magical creatures, such as a gibbering mouther or otyugh, can cause this infection in humanoids. Humanoids that eat meat from these creatures must succeed a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or succumb to blue guts, which manifests within 1d4 days and causes a blue discoloration of the mouth, the skin around the eyes, and the intestines.

A creature with blue guts recovers only half as many hit dice with a long rest (round down, small hit dice have higher priority to remain), and needs only two failed death saving throws to die completely. This creature's movement speed decreases by 5 feet, and the creature must stop to retch for five minutes once every hour.

While a creature with blue guts is retching, every humanoid within 30 feet of it must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, that humanoid becomes afflicted with blue guts. A creature that succeeds on this save automatically succeeds on all saves against contracting blue guts for the next 24 hours.

After a long rest, a creature suffering from blue guts may attempt to induce vomiting to purge the disease from their system. Such an attempt causes 2d4 necrotic damage which may not be reduced or ignored in any way, and requires the creature to make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw with disadvantage. On a success, the creature no longer suffers from blue guts.

Deathsong

A horrific disease with an origin that can be traced back to dark cults and necromantic rituals, deathsong spreads rapidly and causes those affected by it to scream viciously as it withers and blackens their bodies.

Creatures can become infected with deathsong after spending a day in a location deeply tainted by undeath, or by touching another creature infected with deathsong. In either case, the creature must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become infected with deathsong. If a creature succeeds on this saving throw, it is immune to becoming infected with deathsong for 24 hours.

Symptoms become apparent after the disease incubates for 1 day, after which the infected creature is

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Mental Illness and Player Characters

Though many diseases are listed here, mental illnesses have been specifically omitted. While these impairments could easily fall under the header of Disease (or Madness), mental health conditions such as depression or uncontrolled anger are best handled through direct roleplaying. Thus, having hard-and-fast rules associated with them (or the ability to cure such conditions with a simple *lesser restoration*) is a disservice to the reality of these ailments.

Similarly, cures and causes for mental conditions are more complex than can be expressed within the scope of a disease, which carries very straightforward and concrete rules. If mechanics are necessary, consider using exhaustion, disadvantage on Charisma or Wisdom checks, an inability to gain inspiration, or a Wisdom save against a compelled action to help illustrate the reality of your mental illness.

Work with your DM to determine both your comfort zones on these topics, as well as to help them understand how you'd like to play your character and what challenges exactly you'd like your character to face.

unable to regain hit points from any source, including rests, spells or class features, and hit dice. The creature receives no benefits from a short rest, spending the duration shrieking as pain wracks their body (but inflicts no damage). An afflicted creature spends an entire long rest thrashing and screaming, and afterwards reduces their maximum hit points by 1d6. If a creature's hit points are reduced to 0, it dies and withers into a pile of blackened dust that immediately begins to taint the surrounding area.

This disease can only be cured through a casting of *greater restoration* or *heal*.

FACELESS HATE

Prolonged exposure to the warped energies of the Abyss or the Far Realms may manifest as this disease, which gradually robs those suffering it of their identities and of any emotions besides blind rage. Humanoids that spend greater than 30 consecutive days in such an environment must succeed a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be afflicted by faceless hate. A creature that succeeds this saving throw is immune for the rest of its lifespan.

This disease incubates for a number of days equal to the infected creature's total character level or CR, during which time the creature has disadvantage on all Strength and Constitution checks and saving throws, feeling dramatically weak and irritable. During this time, the disease may be cured with *lesser restoration*, *heal*, or similar magic.

After this period, an infected creature's face is immediately absorbed by their skin, removing their eyes, nose, mouth, and ears. The creature becomes blind, deafened, and cannot speak, but gains blindsight out to 60 feet, can ignore any verbal components of spells, and no longer needs to eat, drink, or breathe. The creature's alignment becomes chaotic evil, and it the only emotions it can feel are an undying hatred for and desire to kill any creature it used to love.

Once the disease has progressed to this point, it may only be removed with a *wish* spell, or by killing the afflicted creature and resurrecting it.

IRON CORRUPTION

The fey have good reason to fear iron, as attacks dealing significant damage (usually 30 hit points or greater) to fey creatures from iron weapons can inflict iron corruption upon the hapless fey, causing black-grey veining around the site of the wound, along with horrible chills and a powerful feeling of weakness. Your DM may decide this also applies to humanoid creatures that are sufficiently fey, such as forest gnomes or eladrin. In any case, such creatures must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be infected with the disease. Succeeding on this saving throw grants automatic success on all saves against iron corruption for the next 24 hours.

Signs of iron corruption appear immediately after infection. A creature suffering from iron corruption has vulnerability to piercing, slashing, and bludgeoning damage.

This disease may be cured through use of *lesser restoration*, *heal*, or similar magic, as well as undertaking a long rest in a location of powerful fey magic.

LIFE BLINDNESS

A strange magical pathogen, life blindness is caused by airborne microbial organisms that feed on a creature's ability to perceive living creatures. This disease is often found in abandoned areas of arcane study, living in pungent infestations of moss. Sometimes, the microbes that cause this disease are rigged into a treasure chest as a trap, should an unwary creature attempt to open it.

If a creature is subjected to a concentration of the microbes that cause this disease, it must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. A creature that fails this save is infected with life blindness, while a success indicates the creature is immune to life blindness for 24 hours. If a creature is infected with life blindness it displays symptoms after 1 day, which outwardly manifest as a bleaching of their eyes to a ghostly white, save for the blackness of their pupils.

After symptoms manifest, a creature suffering from life blindness treats all living things (including plants, but not elementals or constructs) as if they were invisible and unable to be heard. The creature may still touch and physically interact with living things, and is able to see many of their effects on the environment (such as footprints, doors opening, and similar).

At the end of each long rest, an afflicted creature makes a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, reducing the future DC of this saving throw by 1d8 on a success. Once the DC of this saving throw reaches 0, the creature recovers from life blindness.

SOULWRACK

Sometimes, when a creature is subjected to the possession ability (such as that belonging to a ghost) by a being with a higher level or CR than their own, the experience can damage the creature's connection to their own soul. In such a circumstance, the creature must roll a DC 12 Charisma saving throw. If they fail this saving throw, they succumb to soulwrack, while success on this saving throw grants immunity to soulwrack for 24 hours.

Signs of soulwrack are immediately visible, and manifest as a series of ghostly afterimages left behind an infected creature as it moves. While afflicted with soulwrack, a creature has disadvantage on rolls for initiative and Dexterity saving throws, as the condition causes a serious delay in the creature's reflexes.

Recovering from this ailment requires re-exerting your sense of self. Whenever a creature with soulwrack gains a point of inspiration, it may immediately expend it to attempt to cure themselves. If they do, they repeat the original saving throw against this disease, ending the disease on a success.

STICKY FINGERS

Prolonged skin exposure to oozes can occasionally cause them to seep into a creature's pores and begin to grow inside the surface level of that creature's skin. Typically, this manifests in a creature's hands (thus the name), but may arise in other bodily locations depending on the point of contact with an ooze. In such a situation, the creature must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, that creature is infected with sticky fingers, while a success renders that creature immune to sticky fingers for the rest of its lifespan.

The signs of sticky fingers appear after 1d6 days, whereupon a thick, viscous secretion the color of the ooze seeps endlessly out of the infected area. This secretion sticks aggressively to all it touches, and slowly digests any organic material it is in contact with that is not part of another creature, dealing 1 acid damage to such objects for each hour of contact. If a hand affected

by sticky fingers is holding an item, that item may not be disarmed nor willingly dropped by the creature holding it. Objects stuck to an area affected by sticky fingers may be removed with a successful DC 15 Strength check by a creature able to hold the item without sticky fingers, though failure on this check exposes the creature attempting this check to possible infection with sticky fingers.

If a creature touches the area affected by sticky fingers for a period of time greater than a minute, they must also make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw against becoming infected with sticky fingers. This applies also to creatures already suffering from sticky fingers, as it can infect multiple portions of their body. A creature already infected with sticky fingers gains no immunity by succeeding these saving throws.

After a period of extreme physical exertion (such as combat), a creature can attempt to sweat out the infection. The creature then makes a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, reducing the future DC of this saving throw by 1d8 on a success. This saving throw may only be made once before requiring a short or long rest to attempt it again.

VILE RIGIDITY

Caused by magically-tainted stone dust in deep caves, this disease slowly turns its victims into stone statues. After spending at least an hour in such an environment, a creature must roll a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, with advantage if the creature is a dwarf. If the creature fails this save they become infected with vile rigidity, while a success grants immunity to vile rigidity for 24 hours.

After 1 day, the skin of a creature infected with vile rigidity turns a stone-grey hue. During this time, the creature is treated as if it is benefitting from a stoneskin spell without a duration.

In 1 day after this, the creature becomes somewhat slower, reducing their movement speed by 5 feet. After another 1 day, the creature slows dramatically, reducing their movement speed by an additional 10 feet and suffering disadvantage on all Dexterity rolls. During the progression of this disease, it may be cured at any time through use of *lesser restoration*, *heal*, or similar magic.

In 1 more day after this point, the creature loses all of these effects and is instead subject to the petrified condition. Once the disease has progressed to this stage, only a *greater restoration* or *heal* spell can cure the infected creature.