

TWO DOZEN DANGEROUS DISEASES



Smart adventurers boil their drinking water, splash alcohol on their battle wounds and check their potential romantic conquests for boils and sores because of hard-taught lessons. No matter how mighty or experienced the character, an illness can lay him low. Diseases can't be fought and often can't be avoided, considering the risks that come with the adventuring lifestyle. Heroes and villains alike have good reasons to fear this collection of two dozen diseases for the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game.

BLACK BOWELS

Black Bowels is an especially nasty infection caused by parasites found in livestock dung. The disease is easily spread among herds, and can afflict anyone consuming meat or milk from an infected animal. Black Bowels gets its name from the dark, bruise-like

discolorations that spread across the stomach of those suffering it

Type Disease, ingested; **Save** Fortitude DC 16

Onset 1d3 days; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d6 Strength damage. Targets are considered *sickened* until the disease runs its course; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves

BLACK LUNG

A respiratory disease often contracted by miners and others who work in closed, sooty environments, black lung slowly kills all but the toughest victims. For all their strength and vigor, Dwarven cavers often succumb to black lung.

Type Disease, inhalation; **Save** Fortitude DC 24

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Onset 1d6 months; **Frequency** 1/week

Effect 1d8 Constitution damage; **Cure** 4 consecutive saves

BLEACHING ROT

Caused by skin parasites, this disease leeches the pigment from a sufferer's skin and hair. Beneath the skin, the disease is ravaging the patient's body, rotting internal organs. The dissected corpses of those killed by Bleaching Rot reveal the victim's liver and intestines have been bleached white and are as dry and brittle as the paper they resemble.

Type Disease, injury or ingested; **Save** Fortitude DC 19

Onset 1d4 weeks; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d6 Constitution damage and 1 point of permanent Charisma drain. Bleaching Rot cannot reduce the victim's Charisma below 3; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves.

BRITTLE BONES

An infection attacks the character's bones, making them as brittle as porcelain. Most of those afflicted are forced from the battlefield, as even the stresses of everyday life can be fatal.

Type Disease, contact; **Save** Fortitude DC 12

Onset 1 day; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d4 Strength damage. While suffering Brittle Bones the character takes double damage from falls and from bludgeoning damage; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves.

CASTER'S BANE

This magical disease incubates in damp, musty spellbooks, and provides another great reason for spell casters to keep their libraries clean, dry and well maintained. Symptoms include an itchy rash whose pattern resembles mystical diagrams. As the disease progresses, these sigils become more complex and defined; a long term sufferer bears marks that are as clear and precisely drawn as a tattoo.

Type disease, inhaled; **Save** Fortitude DC 14

Onset 1d3 days; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d2 Intelligence damage and 1d2 Charisma damage. While suffering from Caster's Bane, the character cannot cast 0 level arcane spells, nor use spell completion or single use magical items duplicating zero level arcane spells; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves

CATACEPT

This disease is said to be spread by strange parasites that originally fed upon gargoyles and other stone-skinned

creatures. For the stone-skins, catacept is an annoyance at worst, comparable to a minor skin rash in a human. For softer skinned beings, catacept is a deadly and debilitating plague. Once contracted, the disease is a slow but inexorable death sentence. Over time, the victim's soft body transforms to immobile rock, causing paralysis and eventually death by respiratory collapse.

Type Disease, inhalation or contact; **Save** Fortitude DC 21

Onset 1d4 weeks; **Frequency** 1/week

Effect 1 point of permanent Dexterity drain. Characters reduced to 0 Dexterity by the disease suffocate, as their lungs are no longer able to inflate within their calcified chest; **Cure** 3 consecutive saves

DARK APPETITE

This mostly magical virus exists only to spread malice and suffering. Those afflicted with Dark Appetite are recognizable only by the glazed yellow film covering their eyes, and by their insatiable greed. Dark Appetite forces even the most saintly victim to acts of theft and gluttony by killing those who don't give into avarice.

Type Disease, injury; **Save** Fortitude DC 25

Onset 1 day; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d6 Wisdom damage. Those infected with Dark Appetite suffer an additional 2d6 HP worth of damage anytime they are denied the largest share of a prize, whether this be loot from a dungeon or just bowls of stew from an inn; **Cure** 3 consecutive saves.

DYSENTERY

Caused by parasites in impure water and spoiled food, dysentery causes nausea, vomiting and uncontrollable bouts of diarrhea. Shockingly easy to contract, dysentery is fairly easy for a healthy adult to recover from, but can easily kill a child or someone already struggling with illness or malnutrition.

Type Disease, ingested; **Save** Fortitude DC 22 to avoid infection, Fortitude DC 14 to negate

Onset 1 day; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d3 Strength damage. The victim is *nauseated* while suffering the disease, and cannot hold down food. The target begins starving no matter how much he eats- he purges the food before his body can derive any nutrition from it; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves

EBOLA

Ebola is a fearsome plague, and only its rapid lethality and unmistakable symptoms have prevented kingdom-wide

extinctions. Ebola can infest and annihilate a small village in a matter of days, but unlike bubonic plague, its symptoms cannot easily be hidden, and the effects of the disease kill so quickly it hinders the infection's spread. Those dying of Ebola bleed from every orifice, as their bodies are literally liquefied from within.

Type Disease, injury or contact; **Save** Fortitude DC 20

Onset 1 day; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d8 Constitution damage. An Ebola victim must succeed at a second Fortitude Save or half the Constitution damage suffered becomes permanent drain instead; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves

ELFBANE INFLUENZA

The Drow bred this deadly strain of influenza, culturing it in prisoners of war. The disease only surface Elves, and has no effect on Drow or other humanoids. This vile, engineered disease is to be the subterranean Drow's ultimate revenge against their surface living cousins. The dark elves have infected hundreds of Elven prisoners with the disease and allowed them to escape to the surface.

Type Disease, inhalation; **Save** Fortitude DC 15

Onset 1d3 days; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d6 Constitution damage. Only creatures of Elven blood (including Half Elves) are affected by this disease. Drow are immune; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves

FIREFLY WARTS

Parasitic bacteria infest the victim's skin, creating hideous but thankfully painless blisters and scabs. The bacteria glow with a dim chemical glow like a firefly, and the dingy orange radiance is visible through most clothing and bandages. An affliction of the poor, especially those living in crowded ghettos, Firefly Warts are embarrassing, deforming and omnipresent, but non-lethal.

Type disease, contact; **Save** Fortitude DC 18

Onset 1d4 days; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1 Constitution damage. Sufferers are afflicted with glowing pustules which shed like a candle (dim radiance in a 5 ft radius) and impose a -4 penalty on Stealth checks; **Cure** 3 consecutive saves

FUNGAL RIOT

This disease hides in dank dungeons and the lightless caverns deep beneath the world. The disease spurs the unchecked growth of the normally harmless, symbiotic bacteria found in the intestinal tracts of most mammals. Under the influence of the disease, these bacteria enter a

riot of uncontrolled, timorous growth. The disease kills its host by bursting its intestines from within and suffocating the unfortunate creature as the mutant plants erupting from their bowels erupt from their mouth.

Type disease, ingested; **Save** Fortitude DC 19

Onset 1 day; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d10 Constitution damage. The target must make a second Fortitude Save or half the Constitution damage becomes permanent drain instead. Fungal Riot is a disease of darkness and damp; if the victim spends at least 8 hours in natural sunlight or in dry temperatures above 90 F, he or she receives a +4 circumstance bonus on the next Fortitude Save made to overcome the disease; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves

GRAVEMOSS

Gravemoss is a flesh-devouring disease incubated in dead or undead flesh. The disease is most common among those who handle the dead: gravediggers, morticians, and tomb-robbing adventurers, and is often a mark of shame. Those afflicted with Gravemoss eventually take on a corpse like appearance themselves- their skin becomes ashen and waxy, subcutaneous fat deposits dry out, the victim's eyes appear sunken and bloodshot.

Type Disease, inhalation; **Save** Fortitude DC 22

Onset 1d4 days; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d3 Strength damage and 1d3 Charisma damage; **Cure** 3 consecutive saves

HERPES

Herpes is a non-fatal but incurable sexually transmitted disease. Sufferers break out in hideous warty boils several times a year, and only magic can truly remove this disease once it takes hold.

Type Disease, contact; **Save** Fortitude DC 17

Onset 1d4 days; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d2 Charisma damage; **Cure** Special. Two consecutive saves ends the current outbreak, forcing the disease into remission for 3d6 months. Only a *Cure Disease* spell can permanently remove the affliction.

ILL THOUGHT

According to peasant superstition, Ill Thought is spread whenever someone looks at their neighbor with envy and malice. The easily communicable disease attacks the victim's spine and brain, causing muscle tremors, partial paralysis and increasing paranoia.

Type Disease, inhalation; **Save** Fortitude DC 23

Onset 1d4 days; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d3 Dexterity damage and 1d6 Wisdom damage. NPCs afflicted with Ill Thought can never have their attitude improved past *indifferent* via a Diplomacy or Intimidate check; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves.

INFECTIOUS COWARDICE

This strange disease incubates in the sweat soaked clothing of armies on the march. This magical plague is an agent of chaos and fear, and perpetuates itself by weakening the minds of its victims.

Type Disease, inhaled; **Save** Fortitude DC 19

Onset 1 day; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d6 Wisdom damage. While suffering Infectious Cowardice, characters must succeed at a DC 22 Will Save at the beginning of combat. Failure indicates the character must take the Total Defense action on the first round of combat; success indicates the character may act normally; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves

KINDERFESS

This strange disease affects only humanoid children, bringing on rapid hormonal surges that cause rapid growth, but warp the child's bones and dull their mind. Children afflicted by this plague grow into misshapen, hunchbacked dullards with prodigious and uncontrollable strength. The disease's true vector is unknown, the most common peasant superstition is that a few drops of orc or goblin blood, splashed into a wound or fallen into food can cause the inexplicable and tragic transformation, giving farmer-folk another reason to despise these demihumans.

Type Disease, injury or ingested; **Save** Fortitude DC 12

Onset 1d4 days; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d3 Constitution damage and 1 point of permanent Intelligence drain. Only characters in the Young Adult or younger age categories are affected. If a Kinderfess victim suffers 6 points of permanent Intelligence drain from the disease, the illness passes, but not before it wreaks one final transformation. The victim is moved to the beginning of the Adult age category, immediately gaining the physical benefits. The victim gains a +2 inherent bonus to his or her Strength score, but suffers a permanent -2 penalty to his Dexterity and Charisma scores, in addition to the effects already suffered. A *cure disease* spell cannot reverse this final mutation, nor can *restoration*. A *wish* or *miracle* spell is required to return a child to normal if the disease has progressed to this point; **Cure** 3 consecutive saves

LOCKJAW

A muscular infection caused by festering wounds, lockjaw forces the muscles in the victim's throat and jaw to rigidity. Victims cannot speak nor swallow. Some die of starvation; others of suffocation as their larynx slowly squeezes shut.

Type disease, injury; **Save** Fortitude DC 15

Onset 1d4 days; **Frequency** 2/day

Effect 1d4 Constitution damage. While suffering from lockjaw, the character cannot speak which prevents the casting of spells with verbal components, nor can they swallow. Unless fed intravenously or through magical means, the character begins to starve and dehydrate; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves

RABIES

One of the most feared natural diseases in all the world, this neurological infection is carried by the saliva of an infected creature. Bites or scratches from an infected creature transmit the disease, which causes dizziness, nausea and muscle tremors. As the disease eats away at the brain, the victim becomes fearful and violent and eventually begins foaming at the mouth. Rabies victims become intensely hydrophobic, and many eventually die of dehydration.

Type disease, injury; **Save** Fortitude DC 18

Onset 1 day; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d6 Wisdom damage and 1d4 Constitution damage. While suffering from the disease, the victim is considered *nauseated* for 3 hours after drinking or being otherwise exposed to water. While suffering from the disease, the victim cannot concentrate nor use any skills requiring patience, similar to a barbarian's rage; **Cure** 4 consecutive saves

RABIES VACCINE

Alchemists and physicians have concocted a treatment for rabies, but the cure is almost worse than the disease. Each application of vaccine requires a painful injection which inflicts 1 point of temporary Constitution damage, but counts as a successful save to fight off the disease. A patient can benefit from up to three doses of vaccine during a single course of treatment, but must make at least one successful Fortitude save on their own to recover.

Rabies vaccine is carried in tiny potion vials and usually costs 75 GP per dose. An alchemist can brew a dose with a successful DC 20 Craft (alchemy) check.

SLEEP TREMORS

A parasite found in impure drinking water wracks the sufferer with agonizing muscle spasms anytime they relax and try to sleep. Though rarely fatal, sleep tremors can make its victims uniquely miserable, preventing them from resting for days at a time, until they finally collapse with exhaustion.

Type Disease, ingested; **Save** Fortitude DC 18

Onset 1d4 days; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d2 Constitution damage. The character cannot rest to recover spells or Hit Points while suffering Sleep Tremors, and is considered *fatigued* until the disease is cured; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves.

STUMBLE FEVER

Stumble Fever is caused by an infection of the brain and inner ear. Normally, the disease is treatable, though intensely debilitating, but if left untreated it can kill. Those suffering from Stumble Fever are disoriented, easily confused and can never seem to find their balance.

Type Disease, injury or ingested; **Save** Fortitude DC 22

Onset 1 day; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d2 Intelligence damage. The target is considered *flatfooted* and is denied her Dexterity bonus to Armor Class while suffering from Stumble Fever. If the disease is left untreated for six months or longer, the Intelligence damage suffered becomes permanent Intelligence drain instead; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves.

SYPHILIS

This sexually transmitted disease begins by attacking the body, weakening muscles and dulling the reflexes. Left untreated, the disease eventually attacks the brain and cause permanent brain damage, insanity and even death. Sufferers can be recognized by boils and pustules marring their genitals.

Type disease, contact or ingested; **Save** Fortitude DC 16

Onset 1d4 weeks; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d3 Dexterity damage. If syphilis remains uncured for more than 6 months, it begins attacking the sufferer's nervous system. After six months, each day the wearer also suffers 1d2 points of Intelligence damage. The target must make a second Fortitude Save or 1 point of the Intelligence damage becomes permanent drain instead; **Cure** 3 consecutive saves

TIRESIAS

An unusual and likely magical disease, Tiresias is usually non-fatal but extremely damaging. Outbreaks of the gender reversing disease can completely rewrite the existing social order, making the spread of this illness far more dangerous than its low lethality would indicate.

Type Disease, contact or injury; **Save** Fortitude DC 22

Onset 1d4 weeks; **Frequency** 1/week

Effect 1d4 Strength damage. In addition to the disease's main effect, anytime a character first takes damage from Tiresias, he or she must succeed at a second Fortitude Save or have their gender permanently altered. The transformation requires 1d6 days to complete and is intensely painful; the target is considered *nauseated* during this time. Once the transformation is complete, it is permanent; even if *Cure Disease* is cast, the victim's original gender cannot be restored; **Cure** 3 consecutive saves

TUBERCULOSIS

Tuberculosis is a respiratory infection that's very easy to spread, leading sufferers and their families to be quarantined for the good of those around them. In less civilized lands, tuberculosis sufferers are often slain before they can spread their infection.

Type Disease, inhalation; **Save** Fortitude DC 17

Onset 1d6 days; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d6 Strength damage and 1d3 Constitution damage; **Cure** 4 consecutive saves

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