



## 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 plaugelings.

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 plaugeling attendants. The most dangerous of these plaugelings 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 plaugeling from his bowls, dunk it in a vial of disease, and hurl it at his foes. When the plaugeling 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 plaugeling swarm he is aware of in his layer and causes them to begin bloating and expanding. At the end of the plaugeling swarm's next turn, it explodes and dies. Each creature within 15 feet of the plaugeling 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.



# 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 plaugeling swarm or plaugeling 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 plaugeling 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

**Multiaction** 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 plaugeling at a point he can see within 300 feet that is not behind total cover.

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

**Summon Plaugelings.** The plaguefather targets a non-swarm creature within 300 feet that just ended its turn, causing a plaugeling swarm with 34 hit points to appear centered on its location. If there is already a plaugeling 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 plaugeling 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 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 many temporary hit points or hit points instead.
10	The creature can't make more than one attack during its turn.
11	Attack rolls can't gain disadvantage against the creature.
12	On the creature's turn, it must choose whether it gets a move or an action; it can't do both.
13	At the start of each of the creature's turns, it loses any concentration it's maintaining.
14	The creature can't gain advantage on attack rolls or ability checks.
15	The creature becomes brittle. While a creature is brittle, any attack that hits it is a critical hit. 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.
16	The creature falls prone at the start of each of its turns and must use all of its movement to stand up.
17	The creature is charmed by the plaguefather.
18	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 described at the end of this document

## 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.

## NEW SPELL

### 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.

## PLAGUELING STATS

### 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, 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 the end of the document). 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 at the end of the document). 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.



## 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 of decay**. 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.

### CURING DISEASES WITH MAGICAL ABILITIES

Abilities like *lesser 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.

If the check is being made to cure a creature that hasn't started displaying symptoms yet, but the healer knows the creature is infected, the check is made with advantage.

#### 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.

### ART CREDIT

- Zombie Ogre - Nicholas Gregory, Wizards of the Coast
- Blackcleave Goblin - Nils Hamm, Wizards of the Coast
- Undercity Plague - Vincent Proce, Wizards of the Coast

## CHANGE LOG

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- Release document