



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.

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 the end of the document). 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.



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 lose 20 feet of movement when it has half of its hit points or fewer.

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.

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.

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 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.

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 plaugelings, 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 plaugelings 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 plaugelings to use as mounts, quickly running down their new "friends" and imparting their infectious gifts.





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

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- Contagious Nim - Efrem Palacios, Wizards of the Coast
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CHANGE LOG

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