

WARPSTONE

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Diseases in Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay By Michael Anderson

For reasons of length we had to cut some parts of the disease article that appears in Corrupting Influence. These included a number of diseases and some herbs used for curing diseases. We present them all here.

Alzheimer's (Senile Dementia)

Description: Degenerative disease causing cell loss in the brain. It is often an inherited disease. The disease starts at around 40-65 years for Humans, and also in late stages of life for Dwarfs and Halflings. The disease gradually gets worse, and death is caused after some years of spiralling mental health. The main symptom is Dementia. This manifests itself first as a growing restlessness and eventually as total Dementia, leaving the person helpless.

The disease does not contaminate like other diseases. Alzheimer's itself isn't known in the Warhammer world; it is only viewed as a set of symptoms characteristic of old age.

Treatment: Nil

Last: d6+4 years (until death)

Game effect: The character suffers from Dementia (see WFRP rulebook pg. 84), which develops gradually. In the beginning the person is restless (take WP tests only if the characteristic test is failed). Then, Dementia proper sets in, until eventually the person becomes totally demented, permanently suffering the effects described. Additionally, d10 random skills will be lost whilst the disease develops.

Elves are themselves immune to this disease; it is normal for Elves to forget things from earlier in their life (AN pg 54). Dwarfs can get the disease in the ages between 121-170 years, and Halflings between 61-100 years.

Death Rate: 100%

Anthrax

Incubation: Acute - immediate; Subacute - D3+1 days

Description: Contagious epidemic disease of warm-blooded animals. Is contracted either through cuts or abrasions by those who handle carcasses or hides of infected animals. It can also be contracted through the lungs by animal hair and wool. The symptoms are fever, prostration, and malignant pustules on exposed skin areas.

Treatment: Cure Disease reduces the chance of death by 5%.

Last: D3+3 days

Game effect: Normal fever, and pus-oozing pustules. Survivors suffer Fel -10 due to scarring.

Death Rate: 20% Acute, 15% Sub acute.

Aphonia

Description: Lack of speech because of disease in the larynx. Aphonia is actually caused

by other diseases like colds, Influenza, and the more serious (but unknown) cancer of the Larynx. Colds cause Aphonia for a day or two, often in mild cases as temporarily diminution. Aphonia caused by cancer is gained from combined heavy tobacco and alcohol use. Since cancer isn't known, Aphonia is viewed as a "stand-alone" disease.

Treatment: Partial or total surgical removal of the larynx prevents the spread of the disease. This makes the character mute, but in some cases (25% chance) the character might eventually learn (these things takes time) to speak without the larynx. This is done through swallowing air and bringing it up again (speaking with the "stomach"). This is a tiring task, and the character will quickly get exhausted by long conversations. When casued by a cold the sypthoms just need time to heal, during which time the patient should avoid trying to speak, and keep warm.

Last: Colds & Influenza: d3-1 days (less than 1 means a half day). Cancer: permanent

Game effect: The character is unable to speak for the period of the disease (magic wielding characters can't speak out their magic rituals, and are thus unable to cast spells; same goes for magic artifacts requiring trigger words).

Bronchitis

Description: Acute and chronic catarrh in the windpipe caused by infection. The acute version is caused by bacteria infection, while the chronic version is caused by irritations in the windpipe, such as smoking. The disease causes breathing problems.

Treatment: Acute: lots of liquids, preferably warm. Chronic: As acute, and remove irritant.

Last: Acute = D3 days; Chronic = 2d10 months

Game effect: Pneumonia is more frequent in Bronchitis patients; to indicate this, the sick character has a -10 modifier to disease tests vs. Pneumonia. Characters with Chronic Bronchitis gets M -1, T - 1 after 3 months.

Follow up: Acute: 25% Pneumonia, 10% Mild Fever; Chronic: Heart problems, 50% Pneumonia, 20% Mild Fever.

Dengue Fever

Description: Dengue fever is caused by any of four different viruses, and can be transmitted from one person to another by the female mosquito. Outbreaks of the disease usually occur in the summer when the mosquito population is at its peak. The infection cannot be transmitted directly from person to person, and not all people who are bitten necessarily contract the disease.

Incubation: D4+4 days

Treatment: Nil

Last: D6+2 days

Game effect: The character suffers from mild fever during the period of the disease.

Epilepsy

Description: Chronic brain disorder caused by underlying brain damage, characterised by repeated convulsions or seizures. Seizures differ with the type of epilepsy and may result in loss of consciousness, convulsive jerking of parts of the body, emotional explosions, or confusion. Can be caused from an injury to the brain at birth or a disturbance in the brain later in life.

Last: Permanent.

Game effect: The character becomes subject to seizures.

Galloping Consumption

Incubation: 1d3+4 days

Treatment: Medicine - successful use of Cure Disease skill

Last: Until cured

Follow up: 15% Von Addison's disease

Death Rate: Covered by game effects.

Game effect: Every week after the disease is acquired a Toughness test is made, with a one-point penalty for each week which has passed since the disease took effect. The first

failed test leads to a one-point drop in M and S, and a 5% penalty on all percentage characteristics. The second failed test gives a one-point penalty to T and A, and a further 5% to percentage characteristics. The third test is like the first, the fourth, like the second, and so on, alternating between effects. When S or T reaches 0, the character dies. If cured, the victim will need to spend twice as long recovering as they spent suffering from it. Only half of the lost characteristics will be recovered (rounding down), and these will be regained at a quarter of the rate they were lost.

Grey Cataract

Description: Indistinctness of vision. In rare circumstances it is inherited, but is mostly a symptom of age. It can, however, also be the effect of eye injuries with pointed objects. Glasses have no effect on the sight in this case, and the disease can't be treated or prevented.

Treatment: Surgery, failure indicates that the illness couldn't be cured (no further attempts will work as the lens has been forced down in the eye, grey cataracts persist). Failure by 30+ means devastating effect causing permanent blindness.

Last: Permanent, unless cured.

Game effect: GM should give modifiers to all sight-based skills. These should be up to 30%, unless the test is based on BS, in which case the characteristic score should be replaced by a quarter.

Lycantrophy

Description: Lycantrophy is a disease which contaminates in much the same way as Rabies, and can be caught from the bite of a lycanthrope. Treat the bite as causing infected wounds which, if not treated immediately, lead to lycantrophy. The disease enables the afflicted person to change into a were-creature (see WFRP pg. 247). Were-creatures are considered outlawed creatures except in Norsca.

Incubation: 1d3+3 days

Treatment: No cure is known. (Although some might say cold steel)

Last: Permanent

Game effect: The contaminated character becomes subject to Frenzy. While in frenzy the character must pass a WP test each round, or turn into his were form. When the frenzy subsides they must pass a WP test to revert into human form. Different lycantrophic forms exist: 80% of all cases are werewolves, but Were-boars, Were-bears and Were-cats also exist.

Mutations

Description: In many areas of the Old World, mutation is considered a disease. If it is, no effective cure is known. Mutations can be caused by exposure to warpstone, and may even lie inactive in the body and instead mutate the person's children. Mutations can be inherited (a new born child gains half his parents' combined Corruption scores, for those with "The Book of the Rat" (Reviewed in Issue Three). Other mutations can be imposed by Chaos Gods - both as punishments and rewards. A lot of chaotic beasts can cause mutations through infection.

Incubation: Various

Treatment: Cures usually involve quickly severing the mutated part (at least). There is then an 80% chance (at -5 for every hour after the mutation took effect) that this will halt the spread of mutation. Cure Disease cannot be used to treat mutations. The renegade Chaos God Zuvassin is able to cure his worshippers for both warpstone corruption and mutations - Look in SRiK for further details. Other Gods can also do this, but rarely choose to do so.

Last: Usually permanent

Game effect: Mutations can be found in the Realms of Chaos volumes, various issues of WD, TEW, or WFB source-books.

Malaria

Description: Cold fever or swamp fever. A group of infection diseases characterised by

frequently returning cold shivers, followed by high fevers. The disease is caused by the malaria parasite, a blood parasite of the sporozoans class. The disease is not contracted by contact with the sick, but by bites from the female mosquito. After some time, the attacked red blood cells die and the virus spreads to attack new cells. Cold shivers and fevers are caused because of the loss in red blood cells. The body temperature will suddenly rise to 40-41 degrees and falls again after some hours. The disease is mostly known in the tropical areas, but it is also known to infect in other areas as well.

Incubation: 1d6+4 days

Last: Usually for life. Can lie dormant until times of bad health or stress.

Treatment: Extract from bark of the Cinchona tree, known as Quinine. Quinine, a mild toxic, requires Manufacture drug to make/prepare.

Game effect: When the body temperature rises, the character will suffer a heavy fever every d3+1 days. A player with Malaria is unable to do anything during the fevers.

Follow up: The disease may lead to Jaundice.

Death Rate: Normally 20%, however, the more violent Malaria attack known as "Jungle Fever" has a 70% of causing a coma and then a death rate of 85%.

Nurgle's Rot

Description: Nurgle's Rot, or The Rot, is a strange disease. It seeks to turn its victims into one of Nurgle's plague-bearing Daemons. Unfortunately, the mortal form cannot take this torturous metamorphous, and must eventually perish under the strain. Only Champions and Beastmen of Nurgle are immune to its effects; these serve only as carriers. It can be contracted from contact with a bearer's pus/slime or blood, or by some magical means granted by Nurgle.

Incubation: 1d6+2 days

Treatment: There is no known cure for Nurgle's Rot

Last: 8 months

Game effect: Victims gradually mutate until their characteristic is identical to those of a Plague Bearer, at the rate of 1 or 10 points (as appropriate for the affected characteristic) per month. Select affected characteristic randomly each game month.

Follow up: various diseases. As one of Nurgle's plague bearers, the character becomes much more exposed to diseases, but can also survive them.

Death Rate: 100%

Poliomyelitis (Polio)

Description: Acute viral infection that, in its severe form, invades the nervous system and causes paralysis. In its mild form the disease produces lesser symptoms (e.g., low-grade fever, malaise.) Also known as infantile paralysis, it is found world-wide, occurring mainly in children. The symptoms are fatigue, fever, vomiting, constipation and stiffness of the neck. Can cause permanent paralysis

Incubation: 3d4 days

Treatment: Moist heat coupled with physical therapy to stimulate muscles back to health again (Cure Disease test with a -20% penalty).

Game effect: 1% chance of paralysis. If the character is paralysed, there is a 15% chance that nerve cells in the respiratory centres are destroyed, which causes death.

Death Rate: see game effects

Tomb Rot

Description: A disease often carried by Undead and scavengers (vultures, etc.).

Incubation: 1d6+1 days

Treatment: Cure Disease skill

Last: until cured

Game effect: Any character who is wounded by a creature carrying the disease Tomb Rot must make a disease test after the fight, with a - 5% modifier for each wound point lost in the fighting. If the test is failed, the character is infected by the rot, and must make a similar test every day or lose 1 point from T and 10 % from dexterity and

Fellowship. Characteristic points are lost permanently. Tomb Rot can be contracted several times, as it isn't possible to gain immunity.

Typhus, Red Pox (Febris typhoid)

Description: Acute infection caused by the bacteria Salmonella Typhi. These diseases only contaminate by contact with a person who is currently afflicted or who is a carrier. Symptoms are high fevers, headaches, diarrhoea, physical weakness, and red blotches on the body. The disease is often complicated by Pneumonia.

Incubation:

Red Pox: Incubation time 1d10 days

Typhus: Incubation time 2d4 days; on a result of 8, 1d12-1 days should be added.

Treatment: The Speckled Rustwort herb, and successful use of Cure illness.

Last: 2d10 days

Follow up: 40% Pneumonia

Death Rate: 20%

Game effect: During the disease, characters deduct 1 point from S and T, 10 from WP, and 20 from Ld, Cl and Fel. The Fel loss is permanent, and is caused by scars and blotchy skin. Tests against the disease are made at -10%.

Von Addison's Disease

Description: A chronic disease in which the brown pigment of the skin fails in exposed areas. The disease causes physical and psychological weakness, eating troubles, low blood pressure, and disturbance in the metabolism. It typically follows on from Tuberculosis, severe infection, or after surgery affecting the glands.

Incubation: 1d3+2 days

Treatment: Diet and salt (but still hard to cure). Cure Disease at -20.

Last: Until cured

Game effect: The character suffers from depression (WFRP pg. 86), weight loss, Weakness, and Fel -5, Int -10, Cl -10 & WP-10 during the disease period.

Death Rate: 10%

Tooth ache

Description: Only a few people in the Warhammer world look after their teeth, and many people are in permanent pain. When a toothache is acquired, the pain is so strong that the tooth will have to be removed. This can make even the bravest warrior behave like a little frightened child. We are talking about pain which makes it hard for the character to do anything.

Treatment: Removal - no skill required.

Game effect: When a person has several missing teeth (or some of the front teeth), the GM should impose minor Fel modifiers when the character tries to communicate (especially smiling). Furthermore, untreated tooth-aches will impose modifiers of up to 20% on situations needing concentration.

NEW HERBS

Cochlearia (Shallya-Rose)

Standing fifteen to thirty centimetres high, the plant has a rosette of long-stalked, almost circular leaves. Its flowers are white and pleasantly fragrant. The common name - Shallya-Rose - is derived from the stories of Klaustistis, famous for sailing the world. Legend has it that Shallya gifted the rose to him after he was shipwrecked, and was cast ashore ill and dying. He recovered, eventually escaping his island exile with a group of pirates.

Availability: Common, Late Spring to early autumn, meadows near beaches

Price: 5/- to 1GC

Application: Ingest

Preparation: None

Dosage: Twice a day

Skills: Cure disease

Tests: None

Effects: Typically, the plant grows near beaches and can be used as a preventative against Scurvy. The herb must be administered to the patient twice a day for one to two weeks. This gives +20 to Cure Disease against scurvy. (Citrus fruits have the same effect.)

Fieberhitzen

A light-brown fungi growing in shadowy and damp places. It is said to be used by the Fimir, but to what end is unclear. Certainly the tales of Dwarfs using it in their beer-making processes are false.

Availability: Scarce, spring, summer, and autumn. Dense planted marsh, bog or swamp.

Price: 2 GC and 20 GC

Application: Brew

Preparation: 2 weeks

Dosage: 1 day

Skills: Cure disease

Tests: Intelligence

Effects: The Fungi itself is poisonous in large quantities, but the prepared brew is able to minimise the effect of fevers. All fever modifiers are reduced by 1 or 10 points, as appropriate. The brew is not cumulative, and death can be caused from heavy overdosing. The brew only works for one day.

Stellaria Media (Feverfoil)

Famed for its white flowers, this is one of the most common plants in The Empire. It stands two to four centimetres tall and has been popular with herbalists and healers since before the time of Sigmar. It is widely, and falsely, believed to be able to ease fever.

Availability: Common, almost whole year. Meadows.

Price: 5/- GC and 1 GC

Application:

- Rash: Smear

- Eye infections: Smear (eye dropping)

- Lung tuberculosis: Inhale.

Preparation: 2 days, Inhaling: 1 day

Dosage: Once each day

Skills: Cure disease

Tests: Intelligence

Effects: This herb has multiple uses. The first temporarily heals rashes on the skin through bandaging with the herb. The second uses the plant's juices to treat eye infections. It also eases lung tuberculosis (but has no effect on Galloping Consumption). Successful use of the herb on a patient with plain tuberculosis expands the disease tests required to every third month.

Liverwort

A small, flowerless, primitive, mosslike, green land plant characterised by horizontal growth. Its ability to ease kidney complaints has long been known, and has been enshrined in its name.

Availability: Scarce. Usually found growing in moist places all year round.

Price: 2 GCs

Application: Brew

Preparation: 4 weeks

Dosage: 3 days

Skills: Cure Disease

Tests: None

Effects: Adds +20 to all Cure Disease rolls against diseases effecting the liver.

Hysspous (Bauchbaum)

"Hysspous in his stew, like the wind he flew." So goes the (rather poor) translation of a line from a Tilean rhyme. Nevertheless it encompasses the two widely known uses of the herb: as a spice and as a laxative. It is a tree-like herb found in the areas around the Southern and the Tilean seas. Its leaves are shiny, and when it flowers, it does so with a beautiful blue flower.

Availability: Common, Late Spring to late summer. Light woods and meadows in the southern Old World.

Price: 15/- and 5 GC

Application:

- Stomach diseases: Ingest

- Infection: Smear

Preparation: 1 week

Dosage: Twice each day

Skills: Cure disease

Tests: Intelligence

Effects: It is used as a medical cure against stomach diseases (including bowel-worms) and infections. It does act a laxative, but only when used in heavy doses. As a dried spice, the herb counts as being unprepared (of course it doesn't require Cure Disease skill to use it as a spice) and only has a minor curative effect. As a cure against infections, this herb gives a +5 bonus to Toughness tests when determining if wounds are lost permanently.

Verbena

Often mistaken for many of its similar looking (and more common) cousins, Verbena grows up to three foot high plant, covered in summer with small blue-lilac flowers. It is typically found around the less well-travelled roads and villages of The Old World.

Availability: Rare, summer.

Price: 3 GC and 20 GC

Application:

- Stomach diseases: Ingest

- Infection: Smear

Preparation: 1 week

Dosage: Once each day

Skills: Cure disease

Tests: Int

Effects: The herb is used as a universal medicine against Jaundice, menstruation problems and Scabies.