

MUMMY'S MASK



RITUALS OF MUMMIFICATION

The sight of the bodies rising out of the bog paralyzed half of the bandits with fear. Their leader, a man who'd clearly dealt with zombies before, shouted for oil and axes to dispose of them, but I knew better. These were too well preserved, and intelligent enough to set an ambush. People think mummies are all wrappings and pyramids, but bog mummies are as bad as any pharaoh's guardian.

While our captors ran to join the fight, Bertoulli pried the lockpick from his boot heel, and we slipped out of the wagon and fled, never looking back at the dead and dying...

—Violetta Zendara, submitted for publication in the *Pathfinder Chronicles*

RITUALS OF MUMMIFICATION

For millennia, Ancient Osirion's elite employed mummification to preserve their mortal remains for the ages, believing that as the body fared in its tomb, so would the soul in the Great Beyond. What began as a ritual of preservation, however, soon became a show of opulence. Soon myriad mummified servants were interred with their rulers, along with mummified beasts like crocodiles, elephants, and cats of all sizes. At first, these accompanying linen-wrapped corpses merely served as guarantors of the rulers' wealth in the afterlife, but as grave robbers violated tomb after tomb, necromantic arts were brought to bear to supplement the tombs' traps with undying guardians.

At its heart, mummification is a form of embalming in which a corpse is preserved against decay so long as it remains cool and dry, and is kept away from bright light. Natural conditions can also mummify a corpse, deliberately or otherwise. Principally, it is the degree and longevity of preservation that distinguishes mummification from lesser embalming techniques.

In the Osirian technique, preparations for mummification begin soon after death, before putrefaction can set in. First, the body is drained of blood and the internal organs are extracted (the number and the particular type of organs removed vary by era and culture). Next, the embalmer desiccates the body and organs by packing them with natron, a mixture of salt and soda ash that's harvested from the banks of salt lakes. The skin is treated with sacred oils and essences. The organs may be disposed of, sealed in canopic jars, or returned to the body, depending on the skill of the embalmer and the traditions of the era. Sawdust, linen, and plant fibers are stuffed into the body cavities to restore the corpse to its natural shape. Finally, the embalmer wraps linen strips around the body to protect it from the elements and careless handling. Although the actual mummification is complete before any wrapping takes place, laypeople often mistakenly believe wrapping the body is part of the process. Full mummification takes more than 2 months to accomplish, though shortcuts may be taken for less wealthy patrons (or by unscrupulous embalmers).

Other techniques for artificial mummification vary in the particulars, but most involve halting decay, drying the body, and protecting it with a covering or wrapping. In addition to mundane practices, bodies can be mummified by alchemical means. Such techniques range from desiccating the body via alchemical powders to coagulating fluids and organs into a rigid matrix with an injection. Alchemical mummification preparations also serve as particularly agonizing poisons.

Natural mummification can happen in any environment dry enough to desiccate a corpse before it decomposes. Exposure to the air at high altitude offers the best conditions for preservation, with the cold temperatures

and lack of oxygen inhibiting decay while the dry air draws away moisture. It is far from unheard-of to find the remains of lost mountaineers years or even centuries after their death, preserved where they fell by the cool, dry climate. Some mountain tribes on Golarion lay their dead to rest in this fashion. Tribes may retrieve their dead from the mountain heights once the process is complete, or leave the bodies there. Altitude mummification is also sometimes used as a form of execution or ritual sacrifice.

Bog bodies present a particularly unusual form of mummification, in that they aren't desiccated at all. A bog mummy occurs when a corpse sinks into a peat bog, whether deliberately or by misadventure. The acidity and lack of oxygen effectively pickle the corpse, and over time turn its skin to leather. If the bog is cold enough, the corpse mummifies before decomposition sets in. While bog bodies typically exhibit exceptionally well-preserved skin (detailed facial features are sometimes preserved entirely), they suffer extensive bone degradation as the acidic bath leaches calcium from the skeleton, and other chemicals in the bog dramatically darken the skin.

MUMMIFICATION AROUND THE INNER SEA

Little is known of the origins of mummification. It is likely that some form of mummification was practiced by humanoids on Golarion before recorded history, and that the tradition arose independently in multiple parts of the world. Some of the oldest mummified remains found have been those discovered in abandoned caves throughout the Storval Plateau, the territory of the mysterious Kodar tribes who resided there in prehistoric times.

The Thassilonians devised techniques similar to those used in Osirion, though they did not employ this practice in burial rites or out of any respect for the deceased. Rather, Thassilonian wizards sought to duplicate the conditions that led to the spontaneous creation of formidable undead, animate corpses that possessed great strength, durability, and a corrupting touch. They noted that such undead were often exceptionally well preserved, and developed mummification as a means for preparing bodies for reanimation as the vengeful dead—creatures now better known as mummies.

Mummification was perfected in Ancient Osirion. Whether they copied Thassilonian methods or developed them independently, Ancient Osirians soon surpassed Thassilon's knowledge of preservation and animation. Mummification continues to this day in Osirion, and to a smaller degree in the nations that were once provinces within its ancient borders, such as Thuvia.

The methods and cultural significance of mummification in various parts of the Inner Sea region are discussed further below.

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Katapesh: Mummification is occasionally practiced by humans in Katapesh, just as it is in the other lands that formerly composed Ancient Osirion. However, gnoll communities in Katapesh instead practice a form of natural mummification. Though gnolls typically eat their dead, they honor their greatest heroes by displaying these heroes' remains in the desert or on mountain heights. Each morning, a member of the tribe inspects the corpse. If the corpse has decayed or has been savaged by scavengers, the tribe declares their hero to be carrion, and call for a feast. If the corpse survives a full lunar cycle, Lamashtu is said to have shown her favor, and the gnolls bring the remains—now mummified by the desert's arid heat—to their final resting place in burial cairns hidden in the caves of the Brazen Peaks.

Kodar Mountains: The mummification rituals of the Kodar tribes went through two phases. They began by practicing natural mummification, merely setting the bodies on lofty mountain peaks and positioning them to face the rising sun. These mummies typically are found in funerary garb, but some, particularly children, show signs of having been left in the mountains alive in a form of ritual sacrifice. In later ages, mummies were dismembered, cured over a fire, and then reassembled. Bundles of animal hair and paste made from the funerary ash were used to fill out the body and rebuild its features, and a wig made from a descendant's or another tribesperson's hair was placed on its head. Mummies formed by natural processes are generally found in the open air, while fire-cured mummies usually lie in caves. No record survives to indicate why the Kodar tribes preserved their dead.

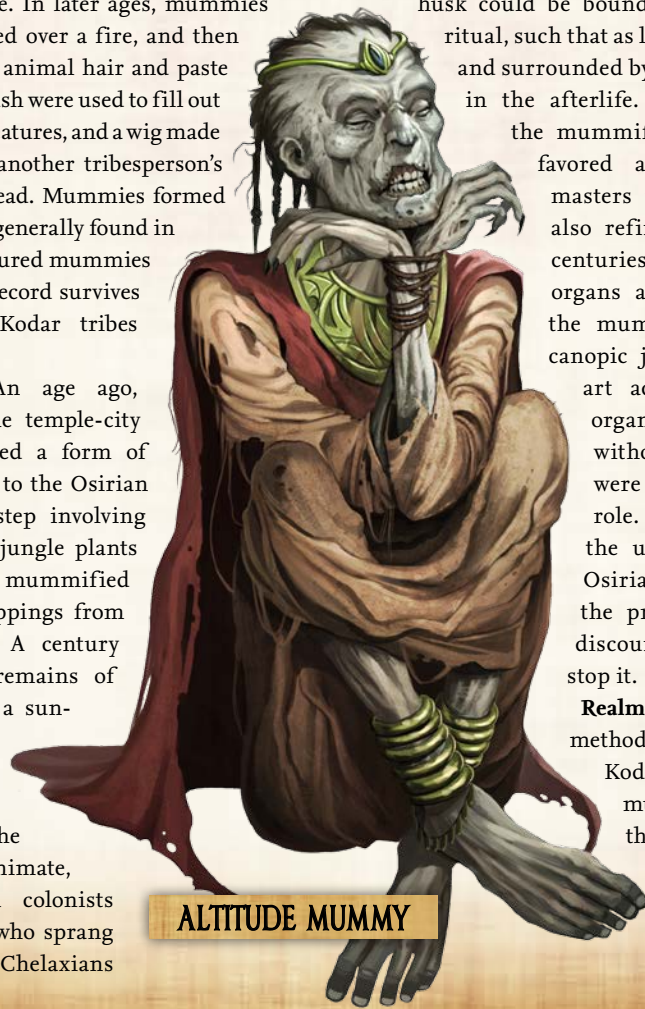
Mwangi Expanse: An age ago, the sun-kings ruled the temple-city of Mzali. They practiced a form of mummification similar to the Osirian method, but added a step involving lacquer extracted from jungle plants to preserve both the mummified body and its linen wrappings from the jungle's humidity. A century ago, the mummified remains of a child in the garb of a sun-king were recovered, and identified by the writings on his tomb as Walkena. Though the mummy was at first inanimate, an attack by Chelish colonists angered the child-god, who sprang to life and smote the Chelaxians

with fire. Now Walkena rules in Mzali, promising to drive the foreign colonists from the region.

Nidal: Of the mortifications practiced in obeisance to the Midnight Lord, few match the horror of self-mummification. Over the course of years, worshipers of Zon-Kuthon starve themselves to the brink of death while ingesting toxic salts to embalm their living organs. When death nears, they bury themselves alive, with only a slender reed for air. There, they meditate on the glorious madness of Zon-Kuthon in the hope that he will elevate them upon their deaths. Those who arise from self-mummification invariably retain a measure of the power and knowledge they possessed in life.

Osirion: Of all the nations of the Inner Sea, none approach the mastery of mummification, the great skill and artistry, exhibited by Ancient Osirion's embalmers. The earliest Ancient Osirian efforts at mummification closely resembled those of Thassilon, and were perhaps adapted from records that have been since lost. Whereas the Thassilonians desired undead guardians, however, the Osirians sought the promise of eternal life in the Great Beyond. The pharaohs believed that the mortal husk could be bound to the soul in a sympathetic ritual, such that as long as the body remained intact and surrounded by wealth, the soul would prosper in the afterlife. Later, this practice extended the mummification of retainers and even favored animals sent to serve their masters in the afterlife. The Osirians also refined their techniques over the centuries. The earliest mummies lacked organs altogether, while in later ages the mummies' organs were sealed in canopic jars. In time, the state of the art advanced sufficiently that the organs could be returned to the body without putrefying, and canopic jars were relegated to a purely symbolic role. In time, the practice spread to the upper and middle echelons of Osirian society. Under Keleshite rule, the practice of mummification was discouraged, though this did little to stop it.

Realm of the Mammoth Lords: Using a method similar to that practiced in the Kodar Mountains, some Kellid tribes mummify their dead by leaving them in the icy heights of the Tusk Mountains. Most of these mummies are sheltered from storms and ice inside caves, where they are interred with



ALTITUDE MUMMY

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their earthly possessions. Some of these Kellid tribes also use the mountains to dispense justice. While oath breakers and traitors usually meet their end by steel, some clans instead abandon traitors high in the mountains, stripped of all clothing and other possessions. In the rare event a traitor survives the mountains and returns alive, he is considered born anew, free of his old name, dishonor, and worldly possessions. In imitation of this justice, a disgraced Kellid may brave the mountains to expiate his sins. He travels as far as he may, naked against the elements, dying when he can climb no more. Many of these dishonored rise again as ice mummies, sometimes staggering down from the mountain heights to seek revenge.

Ustalav: The peat bogs and chilly climate of Ustalav provide ideal conditions for the formation of bog mummies, also sometimes called bog bodies. One specimen, the Maid of Anactoria, attracts supplicants from across Ustalav, who pay homage to the remains in the hope of receiving healing or prophecy. Enterprising villagers search the bogs for similar corpses, hoping to sell them to collectors, universities, and necromancers. Some aren't above interring a murdered traveler in a bog to make a convincing forgery. In the swamp west of Vauntil, a priestess of Urgathoa known as Karelina has taken to pickling her own bodies. She hastens their preservation and reanimation with the aid of a pair of ghoulish druids.

Vudra: Some of the faithful who worship Irori are so in tune with their bodies that they know the exact moment they will die. Some seek to prepare for this moment and ensure the continuation of their bodily perfection through self-mummification, ingesting rare herbs, strange toxins, and specific teas and foods while still alive to prevent their corpses from rotting. These mummies are often housed in the temples where they taught.

VARIANT MUMMIES

Not every preserved and animated corpse is a linen-wrapped tomb guardian. Some cultures preserve their dead in different ways, and the following suggestions can help GMs represent these variant mummies.

Bog Mummy: A bog mummy's DR changes to DR 10/slashing and is vulnerable to cold instead of fire. A bog mummy causes grave ichor (see page 72) with its slam instead of mummy rot.

Ice Mummy: An ice mummy, sometimes called a mountain mummy or a glacial mummy, lacks a mummy's normal despair and mummy rot abilities, and instead gains the chilling touch and entangling wrappings variant mummy special abilities (see below).

Osirian Tomb Guardian: An Osirian tomb guardian is a mummy that lacks the typical despair and mummy rot abilities, and instead has the infested variant mummy special ability (see page 72).

VARIANT MUMMY SPECIAL ABILITIES

The abilities of a mummy reflect the circumstances of its creation. Mummies that arise from traditionally embalmed corpses usually exhibit standard abilities; those arising from natural mummification or more exotic embalming rituals may not.

Several variant mummy abilities replace a mummy's basic despair or mummy rot abilities, as described in the ability, and do not alter its CR. Exceptional mummies may gain additional abilities instead of having their powers replaced. GMs modifying mummies with additional or variant abilities should check the final monster and adjust the CR appropriately.

These abilities can also be applied to undead with the mummified creature template (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4196). For purposes of variant abilities, any ability that replaces despair can replace burst of vengeance, and any ability that replaces mummy rot can replace dust stroke. Optionally, to create a mummified creature with the same special abilities as a traditional mummy, simply replace the mummified creature's burst of vengeance with despair, or replace its dust stroke with mummy rot.

Many variant abilities are described in terms of a standard, linen-wrapped mummy. Adjust the description appropriately for mummies with different origins. For example, an ice mummy grapples and constricts its victims by chilling them to the bone with waves of cold instead of by wrapping them in linen strips (as presented in the entangling wrappings ability).

CHILLING TOUCH (Su)

This mummy's touch carries the chill of glaciers and mountain heights. Its slam attack deals an additional 1d6 points of cold damage, and creatures struck by it are slowed for 1d4 rounds (Fortitude negates). The save DC is equal to 10 + 1/2 the mummy's Hit Dice + the mummy's Charisma modifier. This ability replaces mummy rot.

ENTANGLING WRAPPINGS (Su)

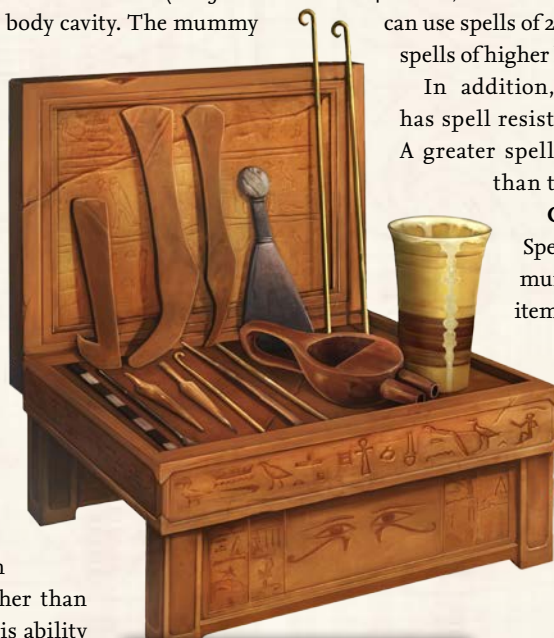
A mummy with entangling wrappings can unravel and detach some of its linen strips to make a grapple check against a creature up to 10 feet away (or twice the mummy's reach for larger mummies). This attack doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity. It can constrict for an amount of damage equal to its slam attack with a successful grapple check. The linen strips remain wrapped around the victim and attempt a grapple check to pin each round on the mummy's turn. They continue to deal constrict damage on a successful grapple check. The wrappings cannot be damaged by any attack or effect while detached, but turn to dust if their victim escapes or dies, or if the mummy is destroyed. If the mummy still lives, its wrappings reappear at the end of its next turn.

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The mummy is not inconvenienced in any way while its wrappings are detached and grappling, but it cannot use its wrappings to entangle again until they return. This ability replaces either despair or mummy rot.

INFESTED (Ex)

An infested mummy carries a scarab swarm (*Pathfinder Adventure Path* #79 89) inside its body cavity. The mummy can release its swarm as a standard action, or it can do so as an immediate action after taking damage from a slashing weapon. The swarm is completely under the mummy's control, and can't be harmed while inside the mummy, though it streams out of the mummy's body if the mummy is destroyed. If the swarm is destroyed, a new swarm grows to replace it in 24 hours. For variation, instead of carrying a scarab swarm, an infested mummy can hold any swarm of CR 3 or lower. An infested mummy's CR is 1 higher than that of a normal mummy, or this ability can replace despair and mummy rot and not affect the mummy's final CR.



MUMMIFICATION GEAR

SPELLSCRIBED MUMMY (Sp)

When scrolls and magical texts are used in place of linen wrappings, the result is a spellscribed mummy. A spellscribed mummy has the complete text of up to three spells written on its wrappings. The total spell levels scribed cannot exceed the mummy's Hit Dice, and the spells must be of a level no higher than half the mummy's Hit Dice. This allows a standard 8 HD mummy spells of up to 4th level that add up to no more than 8 levels. The spells need not be from the same spell list, and arcane and divine spells can both be used in the creation of a spellscribed mummy. Individual spells cannot be repeated. The mummy can use each spell scribed in its wrappings once per day as a spell-like ability, with a caster level equal to its Hit Dice. Save DCs are Charisma-based. A spellscribed mummy's CR is 1 higher than that of a normal mummy.

Lesser: A lesser spellscribed mummy bears a single 1st- or 2nd-level spell in its wrappings, usable once per day with a caster level equal to half its Hit Dice. Its CR does not increase.

Greater: A greater spellscribed mummy operates as a normal spellscribed mummy, but its wrappings can hold as many spells as it has Hit Dice. The total spell levels scribed

cannot exceed twice its Hit Dice, and the spells must be of a level no higher than half its Hit Dice. Spells cannot be repeated, but spells of a level no higher than one-quarter the mummy's hit dice can be used 3 times per day instead of 1. (For example, a standard greater spellscribed mummy with 8 Hit Dice can have up to 8 different spells, of no higher than 4th level, and a total of not more than 16 spell levels. It can use spells of 2nd level or lower 3 times per day, and spells of higher levels once per day.)

In addition, a greater spellscribed mummy has spell resistance equal to its adjusted CR + 11. A greater spellscribed mummy's CR is 2 higher than that of a normal mummy.

Creating a Spellscribed Mummy:

Spellscribed abilities are added to a mummy in a manner similar to magic item creation. The cost is equal to a command-word item that's usable once per day: $1,800 \text{ gp} \times \text{the spell level} \times \text{spell's caster level} \div 5$. For example, spellscribing a mummy with *fireball* costs $1,800 \times 3 \times 8$ (the mummy's HD) $\div 5$, for a total of 3,375 gp. The creator of a spellscribed mummy must possess the Scribe Scroll feat.

VARIANT MUMMY ROT (Su)

Those afflicted with the dreaded mummy's curse wither and fade, resisting all healing until they finally crumble into dust. Other forms of mummy rot exist, affecting the victim in the same fashion as classic mummy rot except where otherwise noted. Typically, the method of mummification determines which type of rot the mummy causes. These alternate strains of mummy rot do not alter the mummy's CR.

Corpse Chills: Corpse chills manifest as bitter cold and frostbite. Those suffering from corpse chills gain vulnerability to cold and resist fire 10. Immunity to cold prevents and suppresses corpse chills, but does not cure the disease if it has already been contracted.

Grave Ichor: Water saturates the skin of victims of grave ichor until their very flesh breaks down and sloughs off their bodies. Grave ichor deals 1d4 points of Dexterity, Constitution, and Charisma damage. The loose skin caused by grave ichor grants the victim a +4 bonus to CMD against grappling.

Phantom Infestation: The victim's skin breaks out in welts, but it exhibits no other trace of infestation until the body bursts in an eruption of scarab beetles at the instant of the victim's death. Phantom infestation imposes a -2 penalty on all ability and skill checks.

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Swamp Crumble: This affliction causes 1d3 points of Dexterity, Constitution, and Charisma damage. The disease dissolves the bones, leaving behind a putrid mass of skin and organs after death. Bludgeoning weapons and effects deal 1 additional point of damage per die against those afflicted with swamp crumble. As the diseases progresses, the victim's hair turns the color of fresh-spilled blood.

MUMMY FEATS

The following feats either expand a mummy's abilities or defend against them.

CLEANSING BURST

Your channeled energy wards off disease.

Prerequisites: Able to cast *remove disease* or the ability to cure disease with a mercy, channel positive energy class feature.

Benefit: When you channel positive energy to harm or turn undead creatures, any undead creatures in the area lose the ability to cause disease with their melee and ranged attacks for 1d4+1 rounds. If an undead creature successfully saves against your channeled energy, this duration is reduced to 1 round for that creature. Immunity to positive energy negates this ability.

When you channel positive energy to heal living creatures, any living creatures in the area gain a +4 sacred bonus on saving throws against disease for 1d4+1 rounds. Creatures not healed by positive energy receive no benefit.

INFECTIOUS WEAPONS

Your weapons spread your sickness.

Prerequisite: Ability to cause disease with a natural weapon via an extraordinary or supernatural ability.

Benefit: Creatures damaged by your ranged and melee weapon attacks have a chance to contract disease, as though they were damaged with your disease-spreading natural weapon.

PESTILENT

Your unarmed strikes and natural weapons cause extra harm to those infected with your disease.

Prerequisite: Ability to cause disease via a spell, spell-like ability, or supernatural means.

Benefit: When you successfully use a spell, spell-like ability, or supernatural ability to cause a creature to contract a disease, you gain a +2 bonus on attack rolls with natural weapons and unarmed strikes against that creature. In addition, such attacks deal an additional 1d6 points of negative energy damage. If you have the supernatural ability to cause a single disease (such as mummy rot), you gain these bonuses against any creature that has contracted the same disease, even if it did not contract it from you.

RALLYING BLOW

When you strike true in battle, you wash away allies' fear.

Prerequisite: Aura of courage.

Benefit: When you confirm a critical hit against an enemy, any fear effect affecting allies within 30 feet is reduced by one step. Panicked becomes frightened, frightened becomes shaken, and shaken is removed. In addition, any ally suffering other effects from a failed save against a fear effect, such as the paralysis from a mummy's despair aura, receives a new save against the effect at the original DC.

TERRIFYING STRIKE

Your touch spreads fear.

Prerequisites: Despair special ability, mummy.

Benefit: Any creature struck by your slam attack must succeed at a Will save at the same DC as your despair ability or be shaken for 1d4 rounds. If the creature is already shaken, frightened, or panicked, it is paralyzed for 1 round instead. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

MUMMY SPELLS

The first new spell below can be researched or learned to create variant mummies. Additionally, Urgathoa bestows the spell *virulence* on her clerics as part of her domain over undead and disease.

CREATE VARIANT MUMMY

School necromancy [evil]; **Level** cleric 7, sorcerer/wizard 7

Casting Time 1 hour

Components V, S, M (onyx gems worth 50 gp per HD of the undead to be created)

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target 1 corpse steeped in a peat bog for at least 24 hours

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** no

This spell functions as *create undead* (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 262), except it creates one of the following variant mummies: bog mummy, ice mummy, or Osirian tomb guardian.

VIRULENCE

School necromancy [evil]; **Level** cleric 4, witch 4

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range 40 ft.

Area all living creatures within a 40-ft.-radius burst centered on you

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw see text; **Spell Resistance** yes

All living creatures within the area of effect, including yourself, must immediately attempt a saving throw with a -2 penalty against any and all diseases they have contracted, even if the onset time has not yet elapsed. On a failed saving throw, the affliction has its usual effect. A successful save does not count toward curing the affliction.