

THE WITCH DOCTOR

A dwarf grips his sickle tightly, his grim expression belying the excitement welling from within. The Duregar's sword slashes at his arm and he takes the hit, eager to use his own life force to destroy his foe.

An elf in ragged clothes strides confidently through the disease-infested population. With a small smile, he lays a hand upon a woman's shoulder, simultaneously giving her comfort as well as burning out the plague residing within her blood.

A halfling looks to her ally, swarmed by kobolds in the dark tunnel system. She thrusts her hands towards them and watches as a veil of blood envelops her ally, causing the kobold's attacks to miss. One by one, the enemies drop like flies.

These people all share a common thread - that they have studied the ways of the body, and the magics inherent in blood. They know the techniques of healing friends, as well as secret ways of harming enemies that many thought were lost to time forever. Their magic stands apart; for it still makes use of the Weave, but it is something equally new and dangerous.

Some study to become a Witch Doctor out of inspiration to help others. They see the manipulation of life force and essence as the next logical step in becoming a renowned healer. Others still see the flip side of the coin, wishing to utilize a power to bring their foes to their knees. While not in direct commune with any gods, some Witch Doctors pay small homages to various deities of life and death, and attain a modicum of holy power as well.

WITCH DOCTOR

Level	Proficiency Bonus	Features	Number of Experiments
1st	+2	Ichor Shards, Experiments	2
2nd	+2	Suturing Pulse, Blood Shroud	2
3rd	+2	Powerful Blood, Vital Practice	3
4th	+2	Ability Score Improvement	3
5th	+3	Extra Attack	3
6th	+3	New Ichor Max, Vital Practice Feature	4
7th	+3	Street Smarts	4
8th	+3	Ability Score Improvement	4
9th	+4	Pain Echo	4
10th	+4	Improved Blood Shroud	4
11th	+4	New Ichor Max, Vital Practice Feature	5
12th	+4	Ability Score Improvement	5
13th	+5	Improved Powerful Blood	5
14th	+5	Vital Practice Feature	5
15th	+5	Hunter's Sense	5
16th	+5	Ability Score Improvement, New Ichor Max	6
17th	+6	Masterful Shroud	6
18th	+6	Vital Practice Feature	6
19th	+6	Ability Score Improvement	6
20th	+6	Lasting Vitality	6

STUDY AND PRACTICE

Witch Doctors devote much of their lives to the study of their craft. Many have humble beginnings as simple village doctors or healers who stumbled upon the inherent magic held in the body's ichors. The ability to manipulate blood comes from a the discovery of the ichors that make up the body, as well as a certain amount of control over magic and the Weave. Some of those with less noble ambitions might go through hundreds of test subjects before perfecting their technique, while others could simply read and learn through careful observation.

The Witch Doctor usually likes to stay on the front lines during combat. From there, they are able to observe firsthand how experimental magic affects friend and foe alike. They create shrouds of blood to bolster their allies defences; or, they use those very same shrouds of blood to pierce through their foe's armor. Through studies, they are able to extract magical Ichors from the wounds they sustain, as well as of those around them, utilizing them to fuel magical experiments that can turn the tide of battle in their favor. Some Witch Doctors even go so far as to purposely draw their own blood, to further their studies.

FEAR, WONDER, AND INSPIRATION

As this type of magic is new to the world, it comes with a certain amount of mistrust. Some folks would even go so far as to feel a superstitious hostility towards practitioners of the craft. What these folk don't realize, however, is that there can be Witch Doctors everywhere around them. There are many doctors, healers, and medicine women who claim some control over blood. They use leeches to attempt to heal sicknesses, and they use open flame to attempt to purge the flesh of sin. These rudimentary crafts are nothing compared to the power that a true Witch Doctor holds. When townsfolk get to witness a real Witch Doctor at work, their reactions are that of awe. The ease and finesse with which they handle their charge is something to behold, and it makes it very easy to determine which of the healers is a hack, and which is the real deal.

Their penchant for healing, their desire to expand their craft, and their need to innovate drive Witch Doctors toward adventuring. Usually not wholly welcome in any one place; they are wanderers by nature, sweeping into town to help where they can, and then sweeping out just as fast. Of course, some prefer to sweep in to town and leave with a few residents in tow, for 'experimental' purposes. There is, after all, a good reason most folks don't trust a Witch Doctor right away. Some practitioners might simply view party members as continual test subjects; while others might develop a strong kinship, and a parental need to keep them safe.

QUICK BUILD

You can make a Witch Doctor quickly by following these suggestions. First, put your highest ability score into Constitution. Next, put your second-highest ability score into Intelligence or Dexterity. Then, choose either the Acolyte or Sage background.

CLASS FEATURES

As a Witch Doctor, you gain the following class features.

HIT POINTS

Hit Dice: 1d10 per Witch Doctor level

Hit Points at 1st Level: 10 + your Constitution modifier

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d10 (or 6) + your Constitution modifier per Witch Doctor level after 1st

PROFICIENCIES

Armor: Light armor, medium armor, shields

Weapons: Simple weapons, longsword, rapier, morningstar

Tools: Herbalism kit or poisoner's kit

Saving Throws: Constitution, Intelligence

Skills: Choose two from Athletics, Arcana, Investigation, Medicine, Nature, Perception, Religion, and Survival

EQUIPMENT

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your background:

- (a) two sickles or (b) a longsword or morningstar
- (a) scale mail or (b) leather armor
- (a) a light crossbow and 20 bolts or (b) a shield
- (a) an explorer's pack or (b) a scholar's pack
- two daggers

ICHOR SHARDS AND EXPERIMENTS

Beginning at 1st level, when you take damage, you may use a reaction to generate an amount of Ichor Shards from your spilled life essence equal to half of your proficiency bonus, rounded up. You are able to expend your accumulated Ichor Shards in order to create magical effects and abilities called Experiments, listed at the end of this section. At the end of every long rest, you lose any Ichor Shards you had accumulated. You can only have a certain number of Ichor Shards at a time, shown below.

Intelligence is your ability when determining the outcome and effect of your abilities and Experiments. Some of your abilities and features require the target to make a saving throw to resist the effect. The saving throw DC is calculated as follows:

Experiment save DC = 8 + your proficiency modifier + your Intelligence modifier

ICHOR SHARDS

Class Level	Max Ichor Shards
1-5	2
6-10	3
11-15	4
16-20	5

SUTURING PULSE

Starting at 2nd level, you can tap into the Ichors around you to heal allies. As an action, 2 creatures you choose within 10 feet of you heal for 1 + your Constitution modifier + 1/2 of your Witch Doctor level (minimum 1). You may spend Ichor Shards to choose additional creatures, adding one creature for each Ichor Shard you expend.

You may use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus. You regain all spent uses on completion of a long rest.

Alternatively, you can use this ability to cure a single target within range of one disease or neutralize one poison affecting it.

This feature has no effect on undead and constructs.

BLOOD SHROUD

At 2nd level, you are able to manipulate the life force of others in order to create a protective shroud. As a Bonus Action, choose one friendly creature other than yourself that you can see within 60 feet of you. That creature becomes enveloped in your Blood Shroud, granting them a boon of your choice, listed below. While they have your Blood Shroud around them, you may use a reaction when they are damaged to generate Ichor Shards for yourself, as shown above. Your Blood Shroud lasts for 1 minute. You are able to create a Blood Shroud a number of times equal to your Constitution modifier (a minimum of 1). You regain all uses when you finish a long rest.

- **Tough Skin:** When this boon is chosen, the Blood Shroud grants the target resistance to slashing, piercing, or bludgeoning damage. The damage type is chosen when the Blood Shroud is activated.
- **Level-headed:** When this boon is chosen, the Blood Shroud grants the target advantage on checks made to maintain concentration.
- **Obstinate Mind:** When this boon is chosen, the Blood Shroud grants the target advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Starting at 10th level, you regain all uses when you finish a short or long rest.

POWERFUL BLOOD

By 3rd level, you are able to control your life force to a larger extent. You gain immunity to disease. At 13th level, you become immune to poison and the poisoned condition.

VITAL PRACTICES

At 3rd level, you choose a Practice that you wish to follow and strive toward. Choose from Bloodletter, Hemostatic Shield, or Shaman, all detailed at the end of the class description. The Practice you choose grants you features at 3rd level, and again at 6th, 11th, 14th, and 18th level.

ABILITY SCORE IMPROVEMENT

When you reach 4th level, and again at 8th, 12th, 16th, and 19th level, you can increase one ability score of your choice by 2, or you can increase two ability scores of your choice by 1. As normal, you can't increase an ability score above 20 using this feature.

EXTRA ATTACK

Beginning at 5th level, you can attack twice, instead of once, whenever you take the Attack action on your turn.

STREET SMARTS

Starting at 7th level, you are able to use your studies of the body to better fuel understanding of the world around you. As an action you may activate this ability. For the next minute, you may use Intelligence in place of Wisdom for any Wisdom-based ability checks that you make. You have two uses of this ability. You regain all uses upon completion of a long rest.

PAIN ECHO

At 9th level, you are able to manifest the pain that a creature has taken as an echo, causing that pain to happen again.

As a reaction, you are able to capture the essence of pain that one friendly creature, designated the donor, experiences. All damage dealt to the donor on the turn in which you used your reaction is stored by you as necrotic damage. It dissipates when used or after one minute. On any subsequent turn, you may use an action to release the Pain Echo, designating a creature as a recipient. The recipient then must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, they take the full amount of damage stored. On a successful save, they take half of the damage. You regain this ability at the end of a long rest.

HUNTER'S SENSE

By 15th level, your mastery over the life force of others has allowed you to have a minor permanent connection to the blood-flow around you. You are able to sense the pumping blood of any creatures standing close to you.

You gain Blindsight out to 10 feet. This feature does not work on constructs and undead.

MASTERFUL SHROUD

Upon reaching 17th level, when you take a bonus action to place your Blood Shroud on a creature, you may designate a second creature for the shroud as well. You are able to choose different boons for each creature.

LASTING VITALITY

At 20th level, you have mastered the art of prolonging death. For every 10 years that pass, your body ages only 1 year.

VITAL PRACTICES

Plague Doctors come in all shapes and sizes, and from all walks of life. Depending on their motivations and their goals, a Plague Doctor will choose a vital practice to hone and pursue.

BLOODLETTER

The Bloodletter focuses their efforts on hindering enemies, rather than helping allies. They are practitioners of pain, and their abilities maximize that practice. Those who pursue this practice can expect their foes to meet a swift and merciless end.

PAIN SHROUD

Beginning when you choose this practice at 3rd level, you gain proficiency in martial weapons as well as heavy armor.

Additionally, you are able to place your shroud onto enemies as well as allies. The shroud allows you to generate Ichor Shards the same way you would whether it is on an enemy or ally.

Whenever you hit an enemy with a weapon attack and that enemy has your shroud upon it, you can choose to expend a number of Ichor Shards. For each Ichor expended, deal an extra 2d6 necrotic damage to the creature. When a creature is targeted in this way, you do not generate a Ichor Shards from the damage dealt to the enemy.

At 6th level, this damage becomes 2d8. At 11th level, it becomes 2d10.

SANGUINE WARRIOR

Upon reaching 6th level, you gain proficiency with the Poisoner's Kit if you did not already have it. Whenever you make a check using the Poisoner's Kit, you may add double your proficiency bonus.

Additionally, if an enemy bearing your Shroud moves while within your melee range, you may use a reaction to make a single weapon attack against that enemy. You may use this reaction even if they do not move out of your range.

ADDITIONAL EXPERIMENT

At 11th level, you may choose one additional ability from the Experiments ability list at the end of this section.

BLOODLETTING

Starting at 14th level, when you roll initiative and have no Ichor, you automatically generate two Ichor Shards.

VITAL RECOVERY

When you reach 18th level, you are able to funnel life force from dying foes into yourself. When a creature is brought to zero hit points and also has your shroud upon it, you may use a Reaction to expend 5 Ichor Shards. When you do so, you may regain half of your hitpoint maximum. You may use this ability once, and regain this ability at the end of a long rest.

HEMOSTATIC SHIELD

The Hemostatic Shield acts as a frontlines doctor, ensuring that their allies are safe and healthy. Those who pursue this practice are able to use their powers to assist and aid friends, allowing them to survive longer in the thick of battle.

IMPROVED BLOOD SHROUD

When you take this practice at 3rd level, your blood shroud improves. You may now choose two of the listed boons, both of which are bestowed upon the creature that has your shroud. Conversely, you may choose two of the Tough Skin damage types for the creature to gain resistance to.

NATURAL REMEDIES

Upon reaching 6th level, you have studied the ways of herbalism and remedies, gaining insight into how to be a better healer. Gain proficiency in the Herbalism Kit, Healer's Kit, and the Medicine skill if you did not already have it. Additionally, you double your proficiency bonus whenever you make either a Medicine check or a check using an Herbalism Kit or Healer's Kit.

You also gain proficiency in Heavy Armor.

VITAL TRANSFUSION

Starting at 11th level, you are able to channel your wounds in order to aid allies. As an action, expend a number of Ichor Shards. Choose any creatures which have your shroud on them; they gain temporary hit points equal to the number of Ichor Shards spent x 6. You must finish a short rest before using this ability again.

COMBAT MEDIC

When you reach 14th level, you are able to see and control the ebb and flow of life force on the battlefield. When you land an attack as part of the Attack action, you may expend a number of Ichor Shards. For each Ichor Shard spent, you deal an additional 1d6 necrotic damage. Choose one creature you can see within 30 feet. That creature gains hit points equal to half of the necrotic damage dealt by this ability.

PAIN BLOCK

Starting at 18th level, you are able to tap into a friendly creature's nervous system to reroute pain. As an action, you touch a creature and expend 5 Ichor Shards. That creature gains resistance to all damage for one minute. You may use this ability once per long rest.

SHAMAN

The Shaman combines their mastery over blood magics with the divine might of the gods. This practice allows a Witch Doctor to tap into a limited amount of spells to bolster their repertoire of abilities.

SPELLCASTING

When you reach 3rd level, you gain the ability to cast spells. See chapter 10 for general rules of spellcasting and chapter 11 for the cleric spell list.

Cantrips. You learn two cantrips of your choice from the Cleric spell list. You learn another cleric cantrip of your choice at 10th level. **Spell Slots.** The Shaman Spellcasting table shows how many spell slots you have to cast your spells of 1st level and higher. To cast one of these spells, you must expend a slot of the spell's level or higher. You regain all expended spell slots when you finish a long rest.

For example, if you know the 1st-level spell Cure Wounds and have a 1st-level and a 2nd-level spell slot available, you can cast Cure Wounds using either slot.

Spells Known of 1st-Level and Higher. You know three 1st-level cleric spells of your choice, two of which you must choose from the necromancy and evocation spells on the cleric spell list.

The Spells Known column of the Shaman Spellcasting table shows when you learn more cleric spells of 1st level or higher. Each of these spells must be an evocation or necromancy spell of your choice, and must be of a level for which you can have spell slots. For instance, when you reach 7th level in this class, you can learn one new spell of 1st or 2nd level.

The spells you learn at 8th, 14th, and 20th level can be from any school of magic.

Whenever you gain a level in this class, you can replace one of the cleric spells you know with another spell of your choice from the cleric spell list. The new spell must be of a level for which you have spell slots, and it must be an evocation or necromancy spell, unless you're replacing the spell you gained at 8th, 14th, or 20th level.

Spellcasting Ability. Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for cleric spells, since you learn your spells through rigorous study and observation. You use your Intelligence whenever a spell refers to your spellcasting ability. In addition, you use your Intelligence modifier when setting the saving throw DC for a cleric spell you cast and when making an attack roll with one.

Spell save DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Intelligence modifier

Spell attack modifier = your proficiency bonus + your Intelligence modifier

SHAMAN SPELLCASTING

Witch Doctor Level	Cantrips Known	Spells Known	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
3rd	2	3	2	-	-	-
4th	2	3	3	-	-	-
5th	2	4	3	-	-	-
6th	2	4	3	-	-	-
7th	2	5	4	2	-	-
8th	2	6	4	2	-	-
9th	2	6	4	2	-	-
10th	3	7	4	3	-	-
11th	3	8	4	3	-	-
12th	3	8	4	3	-	-
13rd	3	9	4	3	2	-
14th	3	10	4	3	2	-
15th	3	10	4	3	2	-
16th	3	11	4	3	3	-
17th	3	11	4	3	3	-
18th	3	11	4	3	3	-
19th	3	12	4	3	3	1
20th	3	13	4	3	3	1

ASSISTED HEALING

At 3rd level, your blood shroud is able to enhance healing magic within it. Whenever an ally that has your blood shroud rolls dice to recover hit points, you may use a reaction to allow them to treat the die as if it was the max number rolled. You may use this ability twice per rest. You recover all uses upon finishing a long rest.

SHROUD STITCH

Starting at 6th level, you may choose to use your Suturing Pulse ability as if it were centered on your Blood Shroud, instead of yourself.

BLOOD-SOAKED MAGIC

When you reach 11th level, you are able to infuse the divine magic you have with life force, empowering your spells. When you cast a spell that requires a saving throw, you may expend 2 Ichor Shards. When you do so, give the target of your spell disadvantage on their saving throw.

DIVINE STRIKES

Beginning at 14th level, you gain the ability to infuse your weapon strikes with divine energy. Once on each of your turns when you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you can cause the attack to deal an extra 1d8 radiant damage to the target.

DIVINE CONDUIT

When you reach 18th level, you know how to tap into divine powers to restore health to a creature at a small cost to yourself, even restoring a creature from the dead. As an action, expend 5 Ichor Shards. When you do so, you open a conduit between yourself and all friendly creatures within 60ft of you. For the next 1 minute, you may expend a bonus action to deal necrotic damage to yourself for up to twice your Witch Doctor level. This damage cannot be reduced in any way. When you do so, choose one creature within 60ft of you. That creature gains Hit Points equal to twice the necrotic damage you dealt to yourself. As part of this bonus action, you gain resistance to the next source of damage that targets you.

Additionally during your Divine Conduit, you may target a dead creature's remains. They need not be intact for this feature to take hold; and will still be affected even if they are ashes or similarly destroyed remains. That creature is brought back to life with full Hit Points, and wearing whatever nonmagical items that they were wearing at the time of death. The Divine Conduit removes the strain of the revival from the creature's body, and thus it is completely healthy once brought back. However, the conduit places the strain on yourself instead. Make a constitution saving throw, beginning at a DC10 and going up by 1 for each hour the creature has been dead. This DC cannot go higher than 25. If you succeed, you gain 1 point of exhaustion from the effort. If you fail, you immediately drop to 0 Hit Points and must begin to make Death Saving throws.

Once you use this feature, you must finish a long rest before you can use it again.

EXPERIMENTS

You constantly search to discover new ways in which to manipulate magic. This search results in your development of various Ichor-based Experiments, creating magical effects that enhance your abilities, as well as the abilities of those around you.

Choose two listed abilities. You can use them as long as you have the requisite number of Ichor Shards. You may choose another Experiment at 3rd, 6th, 11th, and 16th level.

Additionally, when you gain a level in this class, you can choose one of the Experiments you know and replace it with another Experiment.

BLOOD BOIL

You are able to infuse a primal heat into an ally's veins when they see you in combat, giving them the opportunity to move and attack an enemy on your turn. As an action expend three Ichor Shards, make one weapon attack, and choose an ally that you can see within 30 feet of you. That ally may move up to half their speed and make a single weapon attack as a reaction.

COAGULATE

You can attempt to cause your attacks to temporarily thicken the blood of an enemy, making it harder for them to move. When you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you may expend one Ichor Shard. The creature must then make a Constitution saving throw. On a successful save, the creature's move speed is reduced by 10 until the end of their next turn. On a failed save, the creature's movement speed is then halved and they cannot take reactions until the end of their next turn.

COLD HEART

You tinker with the Ichors in your own body, and become immune to the Frightened and Charmed conditions. When you choose the Obstinate Mind boon on your blood shroud, that creature becomes immune to the conditions as well.

EBB AND FLOW

You learn of a way to draw a small amount of a creature's life force directly to you. As a bonus action, expend an Ichor Shard and choose a creature that you can see within 30 feet of you. That creature must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, they take 1d6 necrotic damage. On a successful save, they take half damage. Either way, you heal for the amount of damage dealt.

Starting at 5th level, you may expend two Ichor Shards to deal 2d6 damage instead. At 15th level, you may expend 3 Ichor Shards to deal 3d6 damage.

ESSENCE SHIFT

You attempt to link your body's essence to another creature. As an action, expend 1 Ichor Shards and designate a willing creature that you can see within 60 feet. You and that creature both teleport, switching places with each other. If it is an unwilling creature, they must make a Charisma saving throw. On a successful save, nothing happens. On a failed save, they are forced to shift places with you. If you switch places with a hostile creature in this way, you cannot gain any more Ichor Shards until you finish a short or long rest.

FALSE DURESS

You can cause panic in a creature that sees it's own blood. When you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you may expend two Ichor Shards. The target must then make a Wisdom saving throw. On a success, they take damage as normal and have no additional effects. On a failed save, they must use their action on their next turn to make a single melee attack against the creature closest to them other than you. If no other creature is immediately within reach, they may use their action as normal.

MACABRE Demeanor

The drawing and utilizing of life force can cause you to momentarily take on a haunted, undead visage. You may expend a number of Ichor Shards. For each Ichor spent in this way, target up to 2 creatures that can see you. Each creature must make a Wisdom saving throw, or be Frightened of you until the end of your next turn.

MOUNTING FATIGUE

You attempt to infuse your strikes with a magical fatigue. When you hit with a weapon attack, you may expend 2 Ichor Shards. The target must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, they receive a penalty to attack rolls and saving throws equal to 1d4. This lasts for one minute. You can only target a single enemy with Mounting Fatigue at a time.

PRESSURE RELEASE

You can cause pressure within your Blood Shroud, eventually bursting like a deadly balloon. As an action, target an ally that has your blood shroud on them and expend a number of Ichor Shards. All creatures within 5 feet of that ally must make a Dexterity saving throw. On a failure they take 1d8 necrotic damage for each Ichor Shard spent. On a successful save, they take half damage.

REVITALIZE

You can now transfuse energy into another's body. Spend two Ichor Shards as an action and touch a friendly creature. That creature is able to remove 1 exhaustion level.

SYSTEM SHOCK

As an action, target a creature you can see within 30 feet and expend 3 Ichor Shards. That target must make a Wisdom saving throw or be stunned until the end of their next turn. You've learned how to freeze an enemy's muscles before they can move.

SYNAPTIC STRESS

You modify your very presence, such that it causes others to feel the weight of mortality upon them. Gain proficiency in the Intimidation skill, if you did not already have it. Additionally, enemies within 5 feet of you or your Blood Shroud have disadvantage on saving throws against fear and charm effects.

VANISH

You are able to test the ocular capabilities of subjects against your magic. As an action, expend 3 Ichor Shards. One creature that you touch other than yourself becomes invisible for the next minute. Anything the target is wearing or carrying is invisible as long as it is on the target's person. The effect ends for a target if that target attacks or casts a spell.

VESSEL BURST

When an ally that you can see within 30 feet of you makes an attack roll, you may use your reaction and expend two Ichor Shards. If you do, you cause the intended target to falter momentarily, giving them a penalty to their AC equal to your Constitution modifier, with a minimum of 1. This penalty lasts until the end of the current turn. You may use this after the roll has been made, but before a hit has been determined.

CHANGE LOG V1.30 - V1.31

- Additional clarity and changes to how Ichor Shards are created
- Found and removed some instances where "Wounds" were still referenced instead of "Ichor Shards"
- Changed Shaman capstone from "Avatar of Blood" to "Divine Conduit". Lined up the ability more with the subclass theme.
- Fixed up wording in some Experiments, as well as cleaned up readability in some class features.
- Changed wording of the Pain Block ability to prevent players taking advantage of the ability. Added that it dissipates once used, rather than being able to be used multiple times during the minute it can be held. Donor must now be an ally, to prevent a team from using all held actions on a single turn to make this ability too strong.

UPCOMING CHANGES

- Adding/taking away Experiments so that they fit more in line with class theme as necessary
- moar playtesting

CREDIT

This class was brought to life using The Homebrewery.
Made by VanZoeren