

# Implants

By

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Sometimes a PCs will is not their own, their mood shifts and their intentions become focused in an unusual way – it could be they're having a bad day, or it's a certain time of the month, but what if this behaviour was brought about by an implant?

## What?

Implants may be magically empowered, cursed or charmed, perhaps sentient in themselves. Their function will be simple and they will be administered with great care, since they are anything but cheap. Implants come in two basic types – those that are continually 'on' (their effectiveness will last up to 1 year max) and those with a simple on/off control, set to a rhythm (on for 12 hours, off for 12 hours) or another trigger, or else controlled directly by the implanter. Implants are often made of tiny shards of magical metals, bone, ivory or elemental substances produced in alchemical workings.

## Who?

Necromancers and sorcerers, demon summoners and other nefarious arcane or hieratic priests have been known to make use of such low and base technology. There again, certain avatars favouring a certain hero, have also been known to implant a charm or boon without the PCs knowledge or permission. Finally, there are chaotic types who simply love the implicit imbalance of it all and see the fitting of an implant as a wonderful game. Many of the latter are quite mad. Generally the act of implantation can be considered to transgress the basic tenets of Good.

## Why?

Reasons vary, but always at the heart of the matter is the notion of control. So, whether it's a powerful lich fitting his captured paladin plaything with an implant of distortion, or the gnome god Kraghalj appearing in avatar form to bless his disciple Gnelsh with an implant of proof against poison, the basic action is the same. Someone is implanted, someone implants, the will of the former is subjugated to the will of the latter. The rest is up to role-play and DM taste. The following provide a few starting ideas.

## Where?

*Body Location Table*

1d12

- 1 dental
- 2 between vertebrae
- 3 in the ear
- 4 directly into the bloodstream
- 5 into a joint (knee, elbow, knuckle)
- 6 into a finger
- 7 into a toe
- 8 into the subcutaneous fat of the buttocks
- 9 into the stomach wall (via the belly button)
- 10 up the nose into the sinusoidal tract
- 11 directly into the brain (through trepanation)
- 12 into the sexual organ(s)

*Type of Implant*

*Roll 1d20*

- 1 empathy (causes a +1 WIS whilst active, and the PC will feel the emotions of the nearest person, or the person with the highest CHA in the area)
- 2 bloodlust (causes a desire to kill whilst activated – no scruples, no discretion, just a deep urge to rip flesh)
- 3 random pain (causes a severe pain in a random body part whilst activated)
- 4 migraine headache (-2 CON)
- 5 proof against poison
- 6 fear (as per the spell) / or ‘proof against fear’
- 7 OCD (the PC will suffer recurring obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviour whilst it is active – DM choice)
- 8 undead pheromones (the PC will attract undead in a 300yard area whilst activated; this is often used by necromancers as a form of ‘bait’ to accrue more undead servants) – to other colleagues the PC simply reeks for no apparent reason)
- 9 blindness (the PC loses their sight for the duration of activation)
- 10 justice (when active, the implant compels the PC to act in a way consistent with their perception of Justice, and to challenge any and all injustices encountered)
- 11 fevered ego (this implant causes egomaniacal behaviour, -3 to CHA, but +3 to the PC’s perception of their own CHA)
- 12 silence (the PC cannot utter a sound when the implant is active)
- 13 lying (the PC finds it imperative that’s/he lie about anything and everything whilst the implant is active)
- 14 infravision (the implant bestows infravision to 100’ whilst it is switched on)

- 15 negation (whilst switched on the implant disrupts all spellcasting activity - 80% chance that spells cast by the PC will misfire or have an unintended consequence)
- 16 Thought leakage (when switched on, the PCs mental processes will be readable by anyone who concentrates upon that PC, as long as their WIS exceeds 12. Surface thoughts are completely seen, deeper thoughts can be probed or followed as they are spotted)
- 17 Fool's impulse (-2 INT) the PC, when the implant is active, will have a marked increase in impulsive, reckless behaviour and will mostly adopt the sense of 'leap right in' or 'shoot first, ask questions later'
- 18 Whisper (once activated the implant allows the controller to speak directly inside the PCs mind, giving incontrovertible orders) \*works best when the controller is with or near the PC or able to perceive their actions directly
- 19 Apathy (once activated, the implant causes listlessness, apathy, ennui and overall existential despair - a pervasive sense of pointlessness in all things)
- 20 Thirst (when active the implant causes unspeakable thirst in the PC (no matter what they drink), and will lead to behaviours designed to get a drink, or else to a delirium where licking the walls or asking a colleague to spit on you is not uncommon)

*Implant Control Type*  
*Roll 1d12*

- 1 on during daylight, off during darkness (light sensitive)
- 2 comes on when the PCs heart rate exceeds a certain rate (say 125bpm for a human)
- 3 switches on during sexual arousal
- 4 switches on whenever a PC becomes angry
- 5 the implant responds to telepathic signals from the being who made it, according to their will
- 6 the implant is fully on during the full moon, and fully off during a new moon - it waxes and wanes in between
- 7 the implant is fully active when its maker is eating, and inactive whilst the maker is asleep - it operates at 50% effectiveness the rest of the time
- 8 the implant operates according to temperature - heat switches it on, cold turns it off
- 9 this switch works according to atmospheric pressure - increases in pressure switch it on, decreases lead it to stasis
- 10 the switch operates when any alcohol is present in the PCs bloodstream, and goes off when they are sober

- 11 the switch 'strokes' on and off at a variable frequency - from minute to minute, to an hourly rate (DMs choice)
- 12 the implant is triggered by loud sounds (explosions, battles, banshee screams etc) and once switched on it will remain on for an hour, then reset and be triggered by the next loud noise)

### *Removing Implants*

This can be done only once it has been established that an implant is present. A PC may feel the physical implant in them, or may have a dream or vision of the presence of such an object. Otherwise, it may be diagnosed by one who has seen this sort of condition before. Or they may be told explicitly that they are now beholden to another who controls the implant.

Methods for removal range from cutting out the implant (may involve the loss of a finger or toe or worse), magically 'breaking' it (as with a Remove Curse spell at a suitably high level - i.e. matching or exceeding the level of the implant's maker) although in this instance the implant may physically remain in the body; or using high arcane or divine magic to destroy it (limited wish, wish, divine intervention of some kind). Larger towns may have specialists in the removal of (and who knows, perhaps the fitting of) implants - these artisans and quacks will likely have a grounding in alchemy, magic, anatomy and the trade of the barber-surgeon.

Of course, the implant's maker can always dissolve or remove it if they so choose (or if they are forced). Some implants, even after their useful life ends, retain a potency, since they may contain a lethal dose of poison or a particular spell that can be enacted once only (so having barely survived a year with a 'tell lies' implant that has finally just ceased operating, Goolak the Fighter, relaxing at last, is suddenly aware of a weird bursting sensation in his arm. An icy swell passes through his trunk, and he begins his inexorable change into a zombie. In a tower somewhere cold, Mendojar the necromancer whistles to himself gleefully.)