

# Deathshroud



## Necromancy

Level: 8

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 8

Duration: Maximum 2 rds./level

Area of Effect: 1 creature/level

Saving Throw: Neg.

The deathshroud spell draws upon the Negative Material Plane to surround the caster with a dark and shadowy aura of life-draining energy. While the caster suffers no ill-effects from this baneful radiance, it has dire consequences for anyone else who comes into contact with it. Magical constructs and undead are not harmed by this spell and cannot activate it.

Once the spell is cast, the wizard can activate the deadly power of the aura by touching a victim, which requires a successful attack roll. A creature successfully touched must immediately save vs. death magic with a -4 penalty. If successful, the creature is unharmed. If the save is failed, a black death haze forms around the creature, draining 20% of its current hit points immediately. At the end of every round thereafter, that number of hit points is again drained from the creature.

The deathshroud might also affect a creature that touches the wizard or tries to strike him with any hand-held object. The creature must make a successful saving throw vs. death magic (with no penalty) or be stricken by the death haze effect. The haze effect is not cumulative; a creature is either affected by it or not.

The following spells end the death haze effect: cure critical wounds, heal, limited wish, wish, or a successful dispel magic. Lesser curing spells and healing potions have their normal effect, and also prevent the creature from dropping below 1 hit point in the round they are used—excess damage is ignored.

The deathshroud lasts for two rounds per caster level, or until the shroud has been activated as many times as the caster has levels. The spell can be ended prematurely by killing the caster or successfully employing dispel magic on him. When the spell ends, all death haze effects end immediately.

This dreadful spell is known only to a select cadre of necromancers who purportedly learned it from a mysterious, bronze-bound book of extra-planar origin.

The spell requires the following material components: crushed black opal and diamond (worth 5,000 gp), dust from a corporeal undead with strong ties to the Negative Material Plane (such as a vampire or wight), and a hunk of smoky quartz. These ingredients are consumed in the casting.

Notes: Very rare; known mostly by a few necromancers. Known to be in the Book of Naz. (Updated from DRAGON Magazine.)