

Wounds and Recovery

A character's wounds (i.e., current Health Points score) determine whether he is active, defeated or dead. An active character is one with a positive Health Points score. Once a character's Health Points score is reduced to zero, the character is considered defeated. If the character then takes any additional damage, he is killed (which could, for example, be from another weapon blow or ongoing damage from poison or disease). Note that 'defeated' means different things in different circumstances. For example, in combat, a character may be rendered unconscious or otherwise incapacitated by his wounds, but in a cave-in he may remain conscious and just be trapped by the falling rock.

A defeated character is returned to 1 Health Point when whatever condition has him defeated changes. For example, if a character was defeated in combat, but his allies defeat all of his enemies, then the character is restored to 1 Health Point. If he was reduced to zero Health Points in a cave-in, he cannot be restored to 1 Health Point until he is freed from the rocks pinning him.

healing

There are two ways to recover lost Health Points: magical and mundane – magic is faster, but not widely available. For natural recuperation, the character must wait one whole day before any healing can begin, thereafter the character will regain a number of Health Points equivalent to half his rank (rounded down to a minimum of 1) for each day of continued rest. Neither magical nor recuperative healing can take a character's Health Points score above his maximum.

Characters trained in the use of medicine that apply their skills on a wounded character immediately after an encounter (combat or trap, for example) may heal as many Health Points lost in that encounter as they have ranks in their First Aid skill. The difficulty of the roll is 9 plus the number of Health Points lost in that encounter. A character can only benefit from one first aid attempt per encounter and may not recover more Health Points than were lost during the encounter.

GMs must decide whether healing is appropriate for all circumstances. For example, a character defeated in combat may be healed and re-join the fight, but a character trapped in a cave-in cannot be healed until he is freed from the rock.

Dragon Warriors Rules Reference – Wounds and Recovery

Major Wounds

A critical hit that reduces a character's Health Points to zero causes a major wound – these are wounds that can have lasting detrimental effects on a character and some GMs may choose to ignore this rule. However, in keeping with the brutal nature of combat, characters should acknowledge that victory or death are not the only two outcomes of combat – even a victorious combatant can be scarred or crippled in a hard-won fight.

d8	Attribute	Example injury
1-2	Strength	Injury to bones, muscles or internal organs
3-4	Reflexes	Injury to joints, nerves, hands or sensory organs
5	Intelligence	Injury to the brain
6	Psychic Talent	Psychological damage
7-8	Presence	Disfiguring scars

Once a major wound has occurred, the GM rolls 1d8 against the table to determine the ability score that has been affected by the major wound. The character loses 1d4 points from that ability score as a result of the injury. If medical attention is received quickly (either magical healing that completely restores the Health Points lost in the attack or mundane ministrations by someone with at least as many ranks in a medical skill as ability points were lost by the major wound), the ability score damage is reduced by 1 (to a minimum of 1). The difficulty of a skill roll is 14, plus

the number of Health Points lost in the attack.

The GM should be creative when explaining the effect of the critical hit and the player should roleplay not just the reduced ability score, but also the injury itself (and maybe a healthier respect for the dangers of combat!)

Example

Sir Balin and Brother Caedmon both fall down a pit trap, at the bottom of which is a spore hound. The other party members avoid the trap and can only watch from above as, badly injured by the fall, Sir Balin struggles to his feet as the spore hound leaps at his throat! The spore hound scores a critical hit, causing 3HP damage and reducing Sir Balin's Health Points to 0.

The GM rolls a 4 on the table, ruling that as the spore hound's jaws close on Sir Balin's neck, a tooth catches his spine and causes 1d4 points of Reflexes damage. The resulting 2 points of Reflexes damage is more than Brother Caedmon can attend to with his First Aid skill of 1. Had Brother Caedmon a First Aid skill of 2, he could have attempted a First Aid check against a difficulty of 17 (14, plus the spore hound's damage of 3) to reduce the Reflexes damage to 1 point.

Crippling Injuries

If an ability score is reduced to 3 or below by one or more Major Wounds, the character suffers a crippling injury. This could be the complete or majority loss of a sense, or a limb, et cetera. Whilst no rules could adequately capture what it is like to play a blind character or an amputee, the player should consider how this will affect their adventuring career. Most adventurers will retire upon suffering a crippling injury, to live out the rest of their lives in whatever comfort their spoils of adventure can provide.

Note that both major wounds and crippling injuries can result in a character's primary ability scores dropping below those required for the character's profession, which will impede, but not obstruct, their progression.

Death

The death of a character can be distressing for a player who has grown attached to him – learning how to get the most from their character's unique combination of abilities and sculpting his legend. While death may be reversible in some exceptional circumstances, eventually a player's character must either retire or die and players should be encouraged to develop legacies for their characters – families, homes, et cetera, to ensure that they have a connection to the world and can continue to game and strive towards their goals even once their current character is gone.