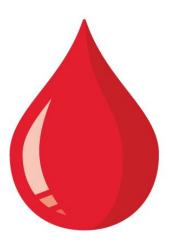
#### BLOOD DROP EMOJI PROPOSAL



#### **SUBMITTED BY:**

MELISSA THERMIDOR, NHS BLOOD AND TRANSPLANT FRANCIS MASON, PLAN INTERNATIONAL UK

#### **ABSTRACT:**

This proposal is to request the inclusion of a **BLOOD DROP** emoji, representing the bodily fluid found in human beings and animals.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Blood is essential to life. Blood circulates through the body and delivers essential substances like oxygen and nutrients to the body's cells. Without blood, we couldn't keep warm or cool off, we couldn't fight infections, and we couldn't get rid of our own waste products.

Blood is eternal and ancient civilisations valued blood through the sacrifice of animals or humans to please or feed deities, for example the Aztecs<sup>1</sup>, who believed their gods fed on sacrificed human blood, so that the sun could continue to follow its course.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Conrad GW, Desmarets AA. Religion and Empire: The Dynamics of Aztec and Inca expansionism. Cambridge, UK: The Cambridge University Press; 1984.



Codex Mendoza, Aztec sacrifice. Sixteenth Century. The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK.

Historically, in many human cultures, blood is seen as a prevailing symbol of life. The tradition to affirm contract, alliances and vows, regarded as irreversible in nature, was done through a solemn ritual that involved the mixing of two bloods as a sacred seal.

In the Bible, blood signifies charity, or love toward thy neighbor; it signifies love to the Lord; but relatively to the Lord it signifies all his human essence. Blood is called the soul and red wine symbolizes the blood of Christ, shed for the remission of sins.

King Charles I and King Louis XVI were beheaded in London in 1649 and in Paris in 1793, respectively, as were the Queen of France and numerous royals, nobles, and clerks. Symbolically, the executioner splattered the attendees with the blood pouring from the French monarch's head, to destroy his former divine power.

The **BLOOD DROP** symbolizes much more than bodily fluid, it's also a step towards gender equality.

In 2017, Girls rights group, Plan International, launched a social media campaign<sup>2</sup> to include an official "period emoji" on the global emoji keyboard, to help break the damaging<sup>3</sup> negative stereotypes and stigma around menstruation.

The campaign ran globally and over 55,000 people worldwide voted for an emoji design<sup>4</sup>. It also gained a lot of international press coverage including featuring in high brow publications such as

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Mashabale "There's no Period Emoji"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Plan UK "Break the barriers, girls experience of menstruation in the UK"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Plan UK Press Release

the Guardian<sup>5</sup> and Financial Times<sup>6</sup>, digital focused media giants such as Buzzfeed<sup>7</sup> and Mashable<sup>8</sup>, and most notably, globally renowned medical journal The Lancet<sup>9</sup>. The latter made the case that taboo and stigma around menstruation is a serious medical issue, and endorsed a blood drop emoji as an effective remediation.

There are an estimated 2,404,606,000 women aged 15-64 all around the world and this number is projected to grow to 2,580,194,000 by 2025<sup>10</sup>, so not only would a blood drop emoji be relevant for hundreds of millions of women and people who menstruate all around the world, it would also show that periods aren't taboo and they are something we should be able to talk about openly and honestly.

The **BLOOD DROP** is also reflective of the lifesaving power of blood transfusions - according to the World Health Organisation, 112 million units of blood are collected globally every year.

In June 2014, Google Doodles<sup>12</sup> honoured Karl Landsteiner, the Austrian-American biologist, in 1901, discovered the four blood types — A, B, AB and O — leading to the first-ever blood transfusion six years later.

Every year on 14 June, countries around the world celebrate World Blood Donor Day (WBDD). The event, established in 2004, serves to raise awareness of the need for safe blood and blood products, and to thank blood donors for their voluntary, life-saving gifts of blood.

Furthermore, millions of people are affected by many different types of blood conditions and blood cancers. Common blood disorders include anemia, bleeding disorders such as hemophilia, blood clots, and blood cancers such as leukemia, lymphoma, and myeloma, sickle cell anemia, thalassemia.

The **BLOOD DROP** is a bodily function that makes humankind a possibility and its significance is recognised globally and deserves representation in the Unicode emoji set. It does, therefore, appear unrealistic to deny the eternal and spiritual value of blood.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Guardian "Period emoji could help girls talk about menstruation

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Financial Times

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Buzzfeed "Period emoji could be coming to your phone soon"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Mashable "There's no period emoji"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> The Lancet "Time to talk about menstruation"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> World bank data on world population

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> WHO 'Blood Safety and Availability'

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Google Doodle, Blood Transfusion

#### 2. IMAGES



Images by Aphelandra Messer. They may be freely distributed in connection with this proposal.

### 3. NAMES

### 3.1 CLDR Short Names

Recommended names: BLOOD | BLOOD DROP | BLEEDING

# 3.2 CLDR Keywords

Recommended keywords: blood / blood drop / bleeding

## 4. SELECTION FACTORS - INCLUSION

## A. COMPATIBILITY

This is a new emoji for inclusion in Unicode and then other systems. It will contribute to the various phrases and usages defined below. There is no known similar emoji.

### B. EXPECTED USAGE LEVEL

## Frequency:

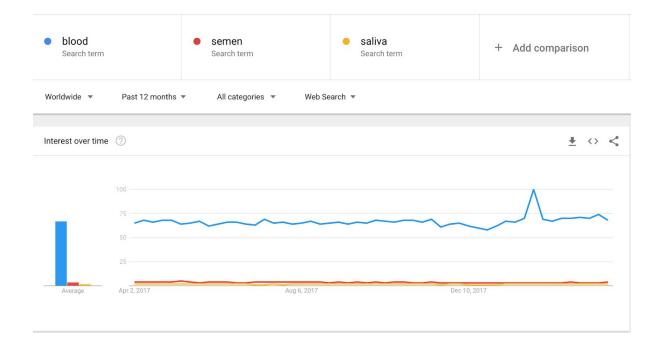
The expected usage of a **BLOOD DROP** emoji is extremely high as shown below:

• The Instagram hashtag counts for 'blood' and 'bleed' as of the date of this proposal are shown below.

| total  | 8 420 526 |   |
|--------|-----------|---|
| #bleed | 189,301   | https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/bleed/?hl=en |
| #blood | 8,231,225 | https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/blood/?hl=en |

• Usage of this emoji will be widespread and global as it is a common and immediately recognised fluid that is used, lost and seen daily by billions of people worldwide.

- In 2014, recording artist Taylor Swift, released a song titled 'Bad Blood', which has now been viewed over 1.1 billion times on YouTube as of 3/29/2018
- The verified Twitter account @BloodDonorsIn connects donors with those in need of blood has a following of 1.1 million on Twitter
- As of 3/29/2018, a search for "blood" on YouTube returns over 40 million results
- Half of the world's population are women<sup>13</sup>, and on average each of them has 450 periods in their lifetime<sup>14</sup>, meaning a blood drop emoji would have global relevancy and opportunity to be used to talk about menstruation.
- A comparative search of "blood" (blue) and other bodily fluids "semen" (red) and "saliva" (yellow) on Google trends shows a higher interest for "blood" over the other terms



## **Frequency Data:**

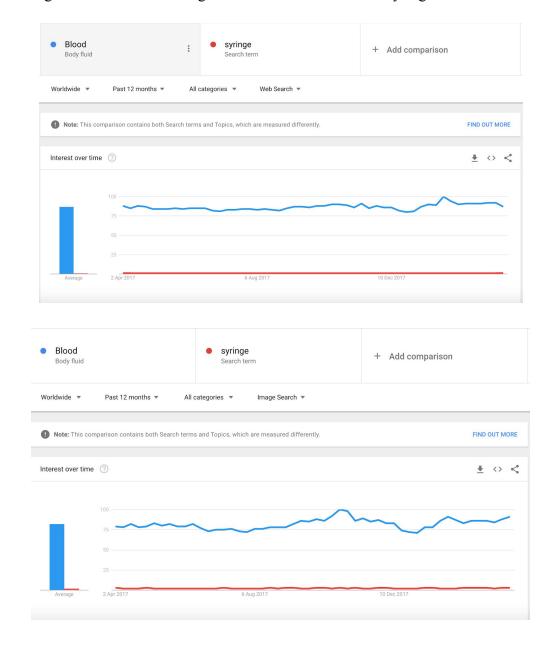
The following search results provide the data requested in the "Evidence of Frequency" section for submitting emoji proposals and all searches were completed in a private browser window. We have compared the terms 'blood' for the proposed emoji and 'syringe' for the comparison existing emoji. The suggested examples from the sample Evidence of Frequency" list do not fit the requirements for blood, but 'syringe' is a closely aligned search term for the existing emoji and is more relevant to the proposed emoji.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> World Bank article

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Association of Reproductive Health Professionals "Menstruation and menstrual suppression survey"

• Google Trends web and image searches for "blood" and "syringe"

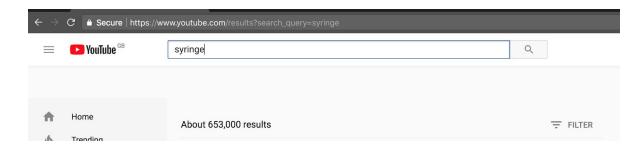


 YouTube, Google, Bing and Wikipedia search results for 'blood' and 'syringe' as of March 29, 2018

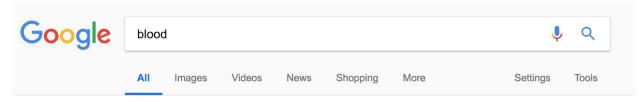
# YouTube 'blood' search results



YouTube 'syringe' search results

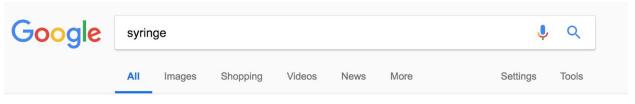


# Google 'blood' search results



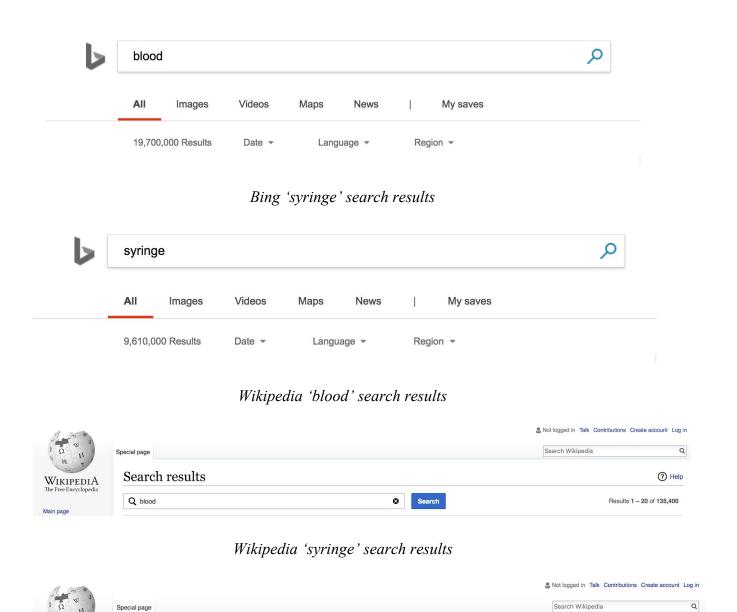
About 1,040,000,000 results (0.45 seconds)

# Google 'syringe' search results



About 57,700,000 results (0.35 seconds)

# Bing 'blood' search results



? Help

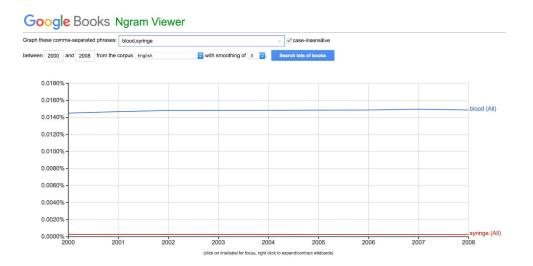
Results 1 - 20 of 2,249

Search results

Q syringe

WIKIPEDIA The Free Encyclopedia

## • Google Ngram Viewer



## ii. Multiple Usages:

The **BLOOD DROP** has several usages:

- The BLOOD DROP is used to express injury, disease and blood disorders
- The BLOOD DROP is used to express blood donation, blood test or blood transfusion
- The BLOOD DROP is used to express menstruation
- THE BLOOD DROP is used in a metaphoric context: "draw blood"; "to be after blood"; "blood, sweat, and tears"; "bad blood"; "blood money", "in cold blood"
- The BLOOD DROP is used to refer to close family members and/or friends: "flesh and blood"; "blood is thicker than water"; "What's good, blood", "blood brothers"
- The BLOOD DROP is used in many common phrases: "bleed someone dry";" bleeding heart"; "blood on your hands"; "I'm on my period"; "It's that time of the month"; "In cold blood"; too rich for my blood" and many more.
- The BLOOD DROP is used to represent Halloween
- The BLOOD DROP is used to represent death (bloodshed) and incarceration

## iii. Use in Sequences

The **BLOOD DROP** is a singular item and will work effectively alone. However, it can be used in sequence:

## C: IMAGE DISTINCTIVENESS

The **BLOOD DROP** is clearly identifiable – even on a small screen as an emoji character. It is clearly differentiated from other characters of related shapes or colours.

### D: COMPLETENESS

The addition of a **BLOOD DROP** emoji would be an important addition as it is globally recognized.

# **E: FREQUENCY REQUEST**

A cursory search of the phrase "blood drop emoji" on Twitter reveals plenty of demand for the character. A small sample from the past couple of months:

"How do I have 3 different snowman emojis, a sake emoji, and a full chess board set of emojis but not one for a drop of blood?.." <sup>15</sup>

"WHY is there no blood drop emoji apple is gettin in the way of my vamp kink" 16

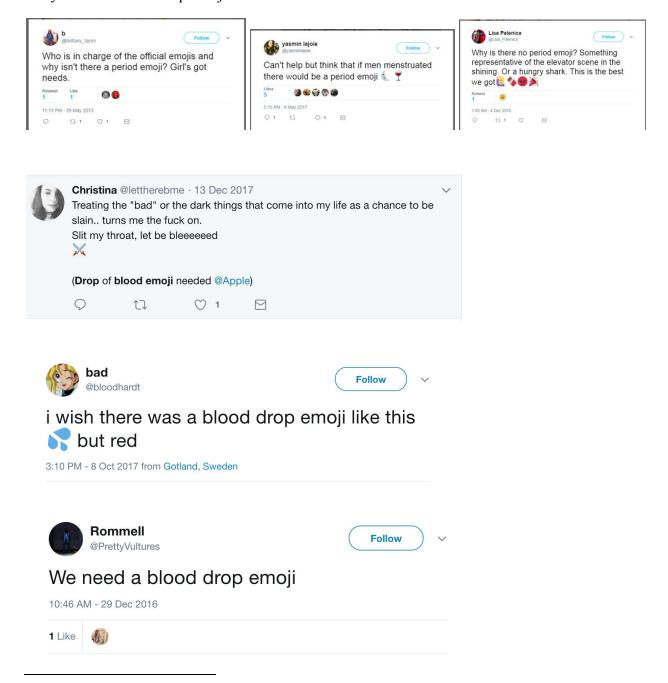
<sup>15</sup> supernova (nova\_star\_girl). "How do I have 3 different snowman emojis, a sake emoji, and a full chess board set of emojis but not one for a drop of blood?." 17 Dec 2017, 5:50AM. Tweet.

<sup>16</sup> TEMPTRESS ROSE (\_afrodisiaxx). "WHY is there no blood drop emoji apple is gettin in the way of my vamp kink" 20 Aug 2017. 9:26PM Tweet.

"is there really not just a blood drop emoji. how am i supposed to properly convey my emotions while on my period" <sup>17</sup>

"they need a blood drop(s) emoji" 18

"why is there no red drop emoji for blood" 19



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Soft dyke tears (sailor\_P00N). "is there really not just a blood drop emoji. how am i supposed to properly convey my emotions while on my period" 7 Aug 2017 8:45PM Tweet.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Bitch do it look like I care.. No (spookyboricua). "they need a blood drop(s) emoji" 2 July 2017 2:34PM Tweet.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Ala stan account (MohoLDN). "why is there no red drop emoji for blood" 15 Apr 2017 2:02AM Tweet.





### 5. FACTORS FOR EXCLUSION

### F. OVERLY SPECIFIC

The **BLOOD DROP** emoji is not overly specific and is vital to life for every living being worldwide. The **BLOOD DROP** can be used in a wide range of contexts in addition to its main connotation.

### **G: OPEN ENDED**

The **BLOOD DROP** is a distinct object with a specific and unique purpose and doesn't open up a direct open –ended set of related symbols.

#### H: ALREADY REPRESENTABLE

There is no easy way to convey the **BLOOD DROP** using existing emoji, but U+1F322, the black droplet could be reused as a drop of blood, by changing the colour to red.

Because **BLOOD DROP** would be so similar in shape to WATER DROPLET, but with a distinctive color difference, perhaps it could appear as a color variant of the existing WATER DROPLET emoji, this would be similar to the HEART colour sequence of red, yellow, green. Other colour variants could be added in the future, like green for snot.

## I: Logos, Brands, UI Icons, Signage, Specific People, Deities

The **BLOOD DROP** is suitable for encoding as a character. It does not contain any references to deities, logos, specific people, historical or living. It is a commonplace item that is universally recognisable.

### J: TRANSIENT

There is no substitute for blood. It cannot be made or manufactured and is essential for survival.

#### K: FAULTY COMPARISON

The submission for **BLOOD DROP** is one made on its own merits – in line with the Unicode selection factors for inclusion – and it avoids the factors for exclusion. No case is made that the **BLOOD DROP** should be included due to other emojis, emoji patterns – or due to comparison.

#### 6. SORT LOCATION

#### A. CATEGORY

The **BLOOD DROP** should be inserted within the OBJECTS section of the emoji language.

## B. EMOJI BEFORE

There are a few places that this would effectively fit, but it is recommended to fit in the Medical category alongside SYRINGE and PILL. This would place it with other related items.

Alternatively, ordering it alongside WATER DROPLET or perhaps SWEAT DROPLETS makes sense as well, with the hope that other colour variants could be added in the future.

# **Character Properties**

The other character properties are suggested to be defined as follows.

General Category: So

Canonical Combining Class: 0

Bidirectional Class: ON

Decomposition Type: Decomposition Mapping:

Numeric Type: Numeric Value:

Bidirectional Mirrored: N Unicode 1 Name:

ISO Comment:

Simple Uppercase Mapping: Simple Lowercase Mapping: Simple Titlecase Mapping:

# Bios

**Melissa Thermidor** (melissa.thermidor@nhsbt.nhs.uk) is the Social Media Lead at NHS Blood and Transplant and a New Yorker who now lives in London. She is passionate about using social media to save and improve lives.

**Francis Mason** (<u>francis.mason@plan-uk.org</u>) is the digital marketing lead for Plan International UK, and has been working to break the taboo and stigma around periods through social media.