PMC U.S. COVID-19 Report for May 18, 2026. pmc19.com/data

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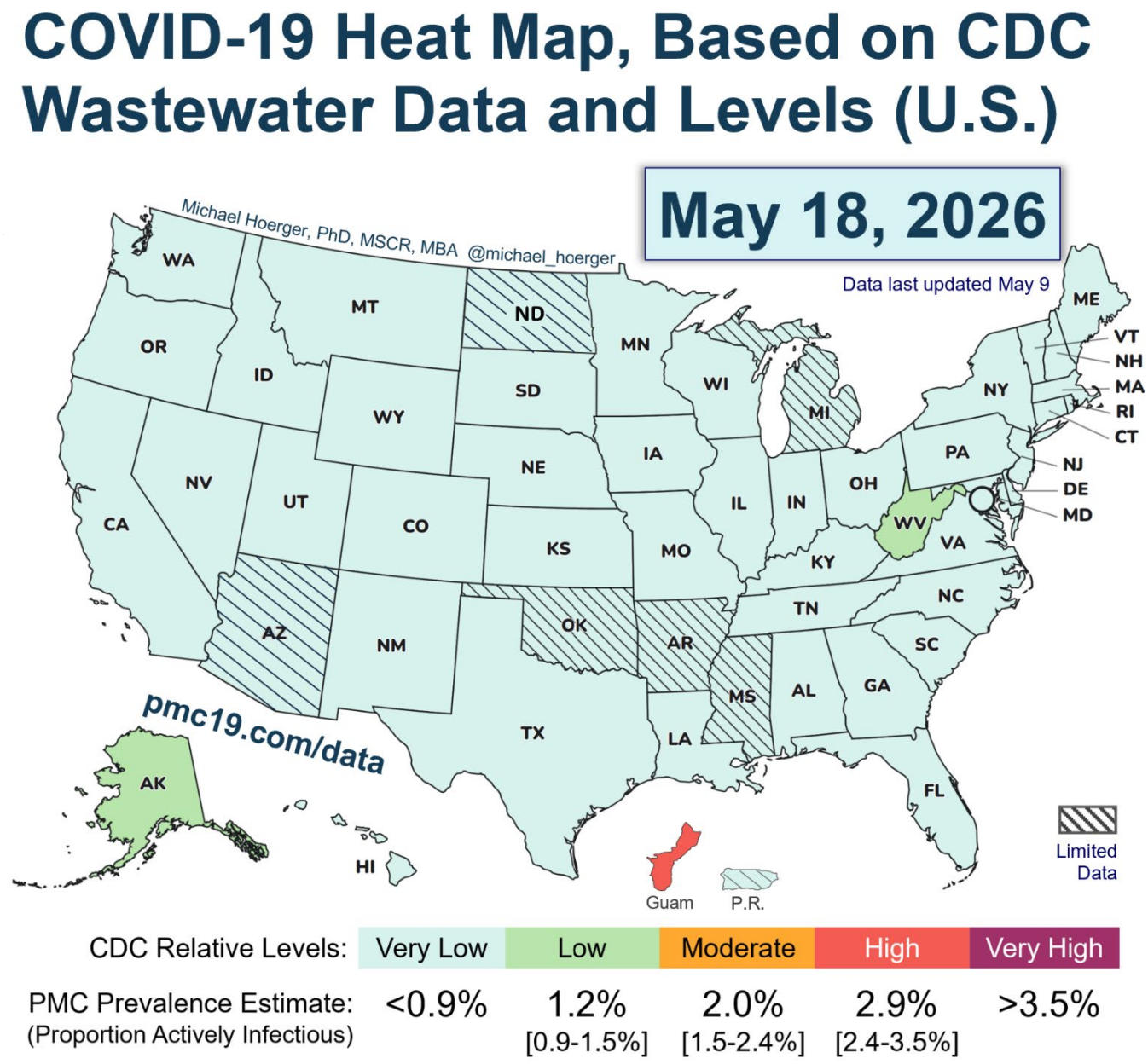

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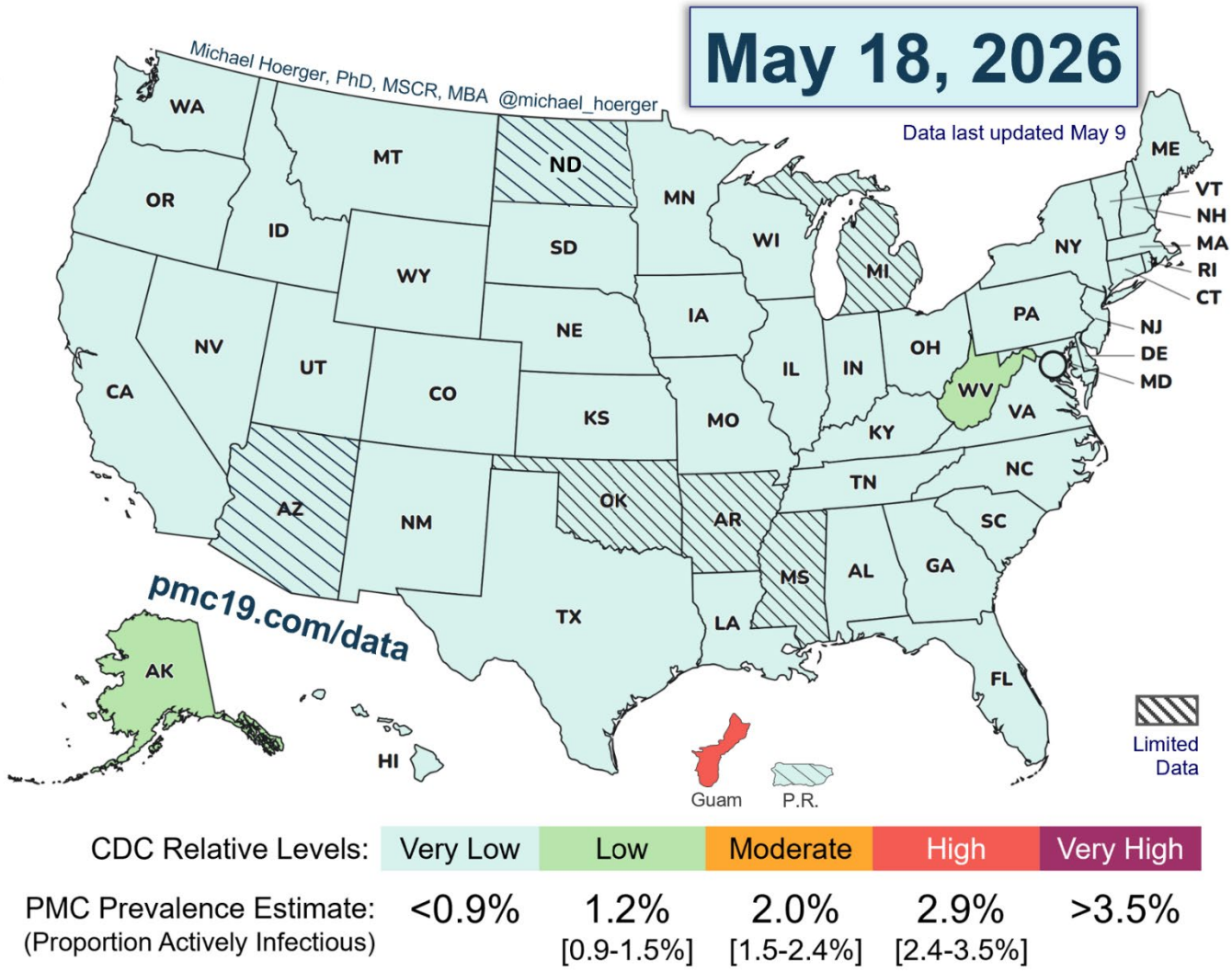
Announcements

Data Quality

- The CDC (80% model weight) and Biobot (20% model weight) both reported this week.
- As we warned a few weeks ago, the CDC has updated their website in ways that reduce data transparency and access. As anticipated, this week, they appear to have stopped updating the main data file we use, which includes all state and national longitudinal data – cleaned and in the CDC format (categories, WVAL level) – from inception to present. Hopefully the file will return, as it streamlines our work considerably. We have an interim plan in place and will ultimately switch over to recontructing that data file from the CDC's raw values if needed, but that makes the work slower. The practical implication for dashboard users is that you may see some disruptions to our reporting schedules.

COVID-19 Heat Map, Based on CDC Wastewater Data and Levels (U.S.)



Estimated levels are still at their lowest since July 13, 2021. All states and territories are “very low,” with the exceptions of Alaska (low), West Virginia (low), and Guam (moderate). Note that Biobot data have run a bit “cooler” than the CDC values since last fall and are actually showing their lowest levels since the first day of the pandemic on March 11, 2020. Note that state-level midpoints can obscure within-state variation. There are isolated hot spots throughout the U.S.

*Note: An initial post of this map mistakenly had Guam in orange; that has been corrected.

COVID-19 State Prevalence Estimates

pmc19.com/data

May 18, 2026

State	CDC Level	PMC Estimate, % Actively Infectious	Chances anyone is infectious in a room of 10 to 100 people			
			10	25	50	100
Alabama	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
Alaska	Low	1 in 95 (1.1%)	10%	23%	41%	65%
Arizona (1 week lag)	Very Low *	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
Arkansas	Very Low *	1 in 168 (0.6%)	6%	14%	26%	45%
California	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
Colorado	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
Connecticut	Very Low	1 in 284 (0.4%)	3%	8%	16%	30%
Delaware	Very Low	1 in 233 (0.4%)	4%	10%	19%	35%
District of Columbia	Very Low	1 in 149 (0.7%)	7%	16%	29%	49%
Florida	Very Low	1 in 183 (0.5%)	5%	13%	24%	42%
Georgia	Very Low	1 in 261 (0.4%)	4%	9%	17%	32%
Guam	**High**	1 in 32 (3.1%)	27%	55%	79%	96%
Hawaii	Very Low	1 in 191 (0.5%)	5%	12%	23%	41%
Idaho	Very Low	1 in 261 (0.4%)	4%	9%	17%	32%
Illinois	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
Indiana	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
Iowa	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
Kansas	Very Low	1 in 255 (0.4%)	4%	9%	18%	32%
Kentucky	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
Louisiana	Very Low	1 in 177 (0.6%)	5%	13%	25%	43%
Maine	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
Maryland	Very Low	1 in 382 (0.3%)	3%	6%	12%	23%
Massachusetts	Very Low	1 in 396 (0.3%)	2%	6%	12%	22%
Michigan	Very Low *	1 in 853 (0.1%)	1%	3%	6%	11%
Minnesota	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
Mississippi	Very Low *	1 in 188 (0.5%)	5%	12%	23%	41%

* Limited data reporting

Data last updated May 9

COVID-19 State Prevalence Estimates

pmc19.com/data *May 18, 2026*

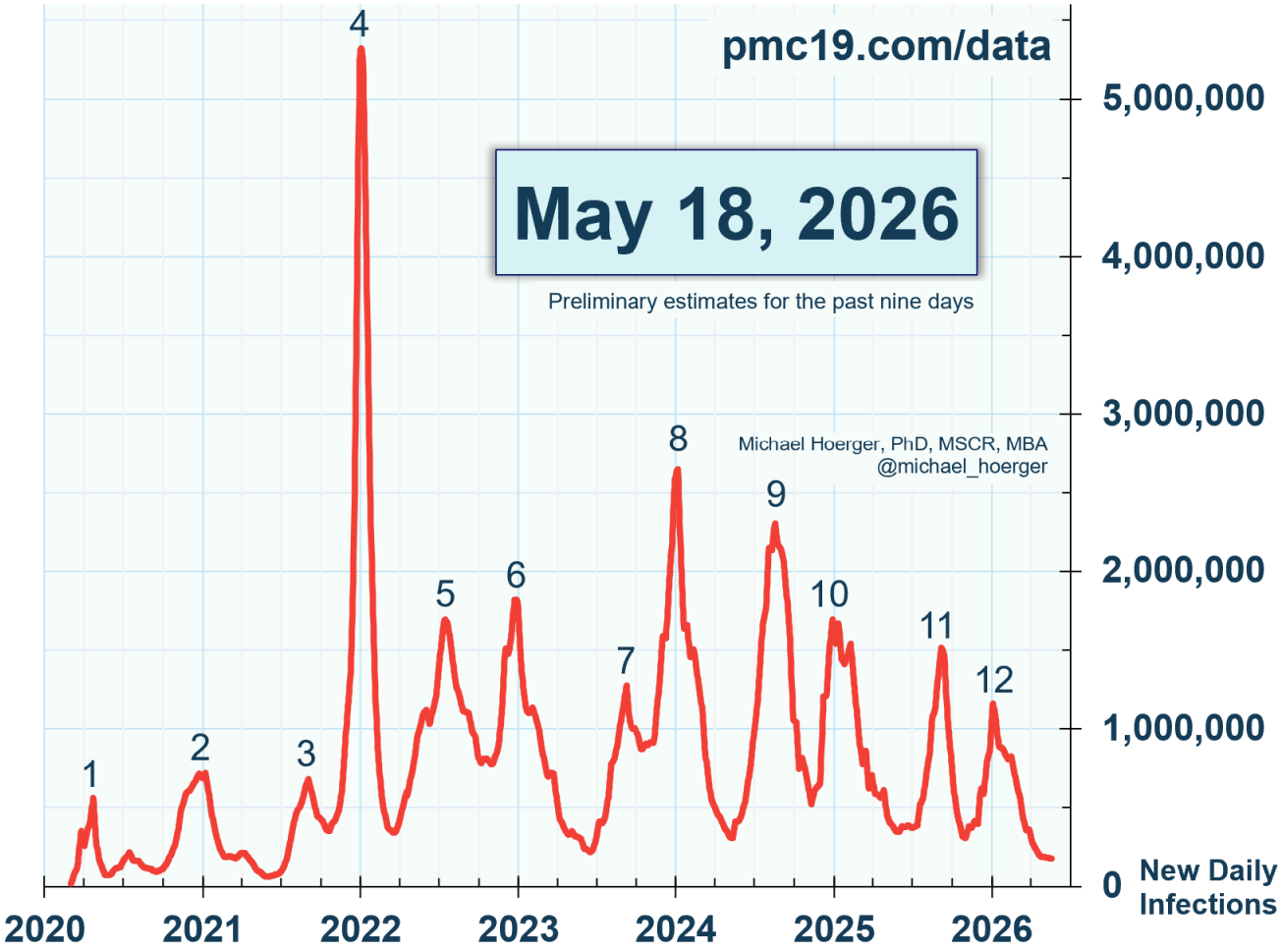
State	CDC Level	PMC Estimate, % Actively Infectious	Chances anyone is infectious in a room of 10 to 100 people			
			10	25	50	100
Missouri	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
Montana	Very Low	1 in 215 (0.5%)	5%	11%	21%	37%
Nebraska	Very Low	1 in 252 (0.4%)	4%	9%	18%	33%
Nevada	Very Low	1 in 267 (0.4%)	4%	9%	17%	31%
New Hampshire	Very Low	1 in 236 (0.4%)	4%	10%	19%	35%
New Jersey	Very Low	1 in 352 (0.3%)	3%	7%	13%	25%
New Mexico	Very Low	1 in 200 (0.5%)	5%	12%	22%	39%
New York	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
North Carolina	Very Low	1 in 155 (0.6%)	6%	15%	28%	48%
North Dakota	Very Low*	1 in 220 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	37%
Ohio	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
Oklahoma	Very Low *	1 in 482 (0.2%)	2%	5%	10%	19%
Oregon	Very Low	1 in 145 (0.7%)	7%	16%	29%	50%
Pennsylvania	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
Rhode Island	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
South Carolina	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
South Dakota	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
Tennessee	Very Low	1 in 244 (0.4%)	4%	10%	19%	34%
Texas	Very Low	1 in 132 (0.8%)	7%	17%	32%	53%
Utah	Very Low	1 in 418 (0.2%)	2%	6%	11%	21%
Vermont	Very Low	1 in 418 (0.2%)	2%	6%	11%	21%
Virginia	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
Washington	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
West Virginia	Low	1 in 92 (1.1%)	10%	24%	42%	66%
Wisconsin	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%
Wyoming	Very Low	1 in 222 (0.5%)	4%	11%	20%	36%

* Limited reporting; ND has no data, averages MN, MT, & SD

Data last updated May 9

Note that while Puerto Rico provides qualitative estimates, useful for the heat map, quantitative levels do not appear to be reported publicly with precision.

SARS-CoV-2 New Daily Infections, Wastewater-Derived Estimates (U.S.)



PMC identifies **12** SARS-CoV-2 waves and estimates averages of **5.2** infections per person and **14.4** months between infections.

Notice that the current levels are comparable to “lulls” in recent years. Current levels are estimated at their lowest since July 13, 2021.

National COVID-19 Estimates (U.S.)

May 18, 2026 **pmc19.com/data**

Infections

Proportion Actively Infectious	1 in 275 (0.4%)
New Daily Infections	178,000
Infections the Past Week	1,250,000
Infections in 2026	75,000,000
Cumulative Infections per Person	5.16

Long COVID

Long COVID Cases Resulting from New Daily Infections	9,000 to 36,000
Long COVID Cases Resulting from New Weekly Infections	63,000 to 250,000

Excess Deaths

Excess Deaths Resulting from New Daily Infections	40 to 80
Excess Deaths Resulting from New Weekly Infections	300 to 500

During this relative “lull,” an estimated 1.25 million Americans are getting infected per week, resulting in significant morbidity and 300-500 eventual excess deaths. Note that levels are about 3 times that of the estimated low point of the pandemic in late May of 2021.

National COVID-19 Risk Table (U.S.)

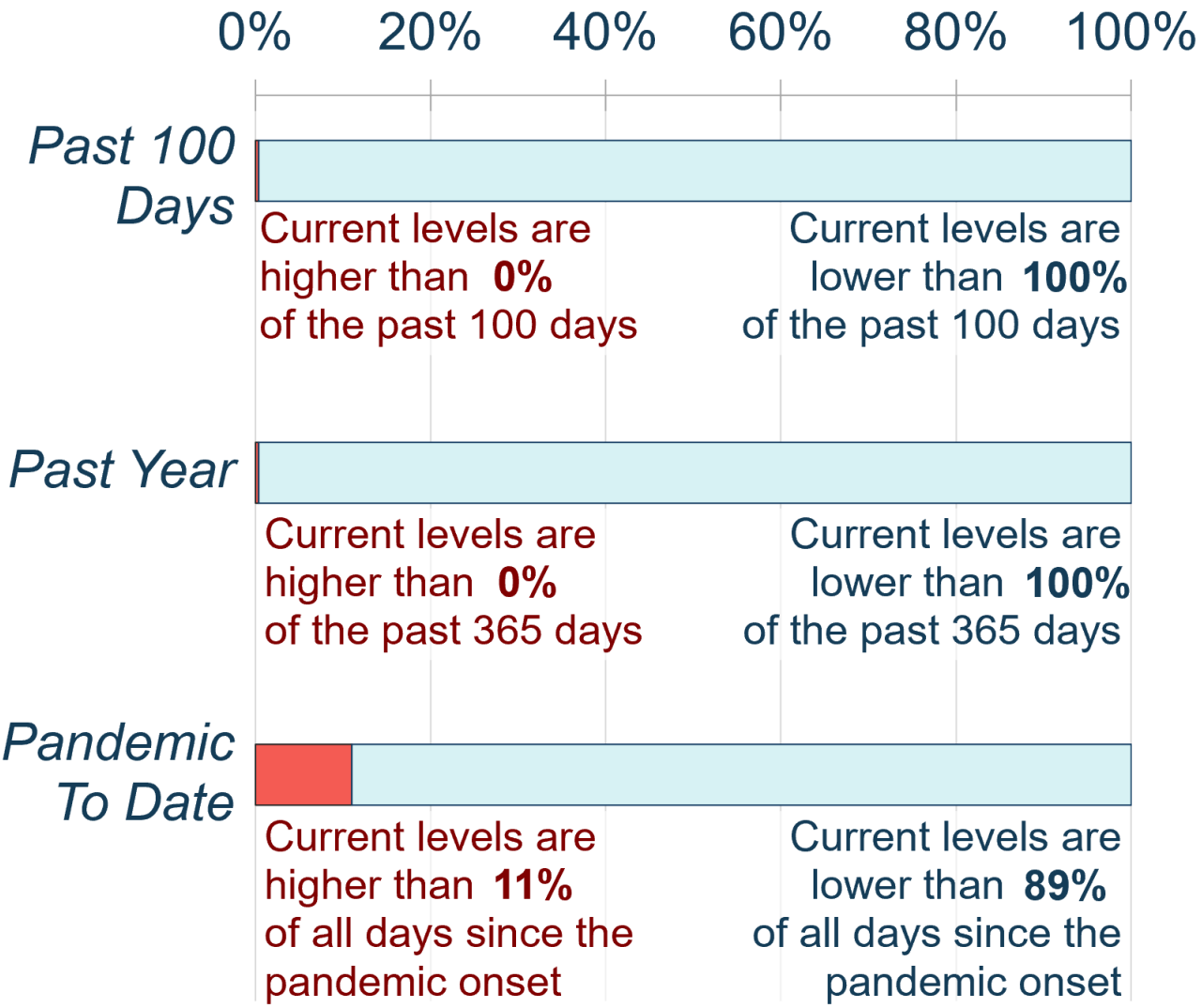
May 18, 2026 pmc19.com/data

Number of People	Chances Anyone is Infectious
1	0.4%
2	0.7%
3	1.1%
4	1.4%
5	1.8%
10	3.6%
15	5.3%
20	7.0%
25	8.7%
30	10.3%
50	16.6%
75	23.9%
100	30.5%
200	51.7%
300	66.4%

In a room of 25 people representative of the U.S. population, there would be a 1-in-11 chance of an exposure if there were no testing and isolation protocols.

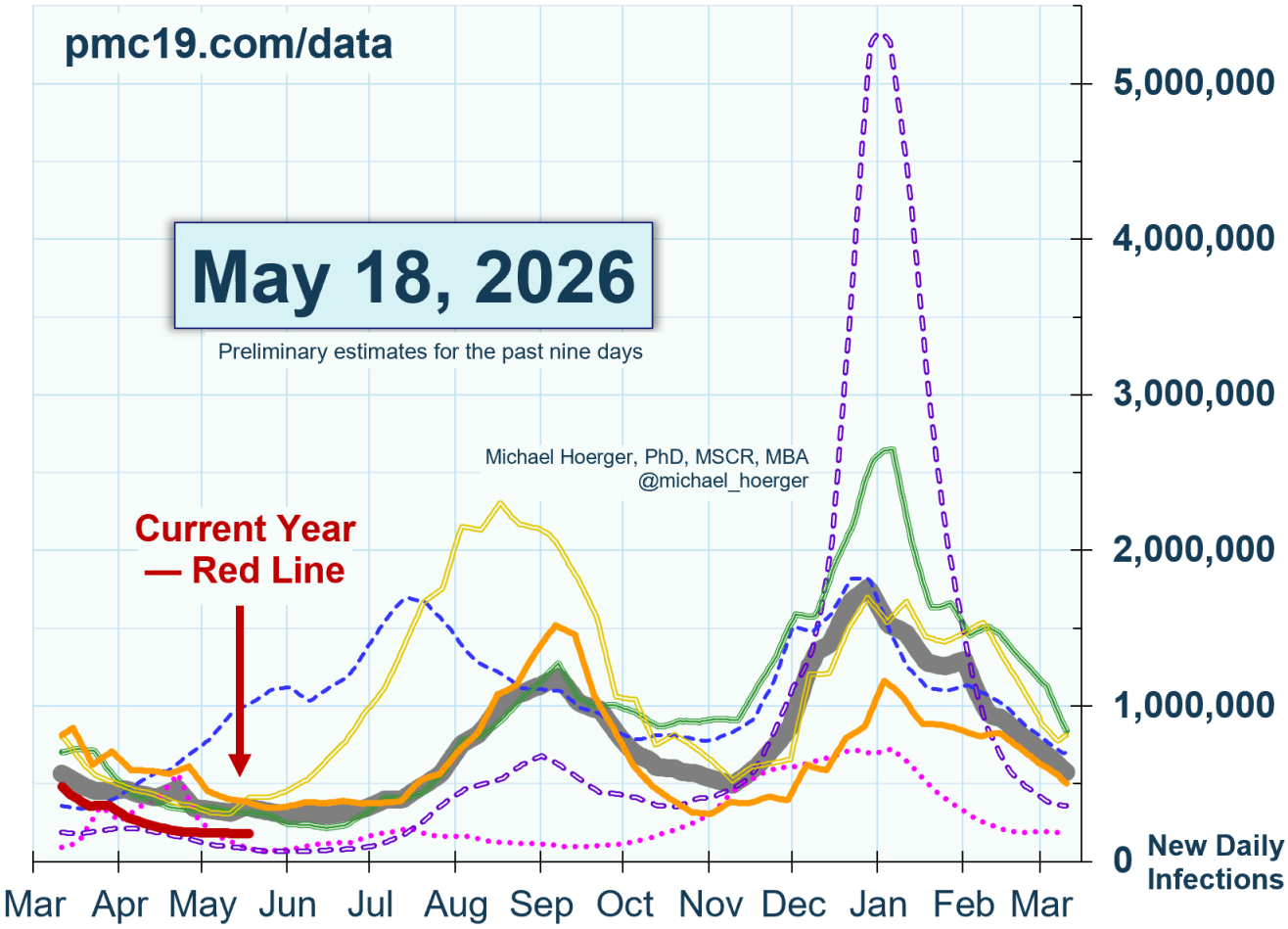
SARS-CoV-2 Relative Transmission "Barometer" (U.S.)

May 18, 2026 pmc19.com/data



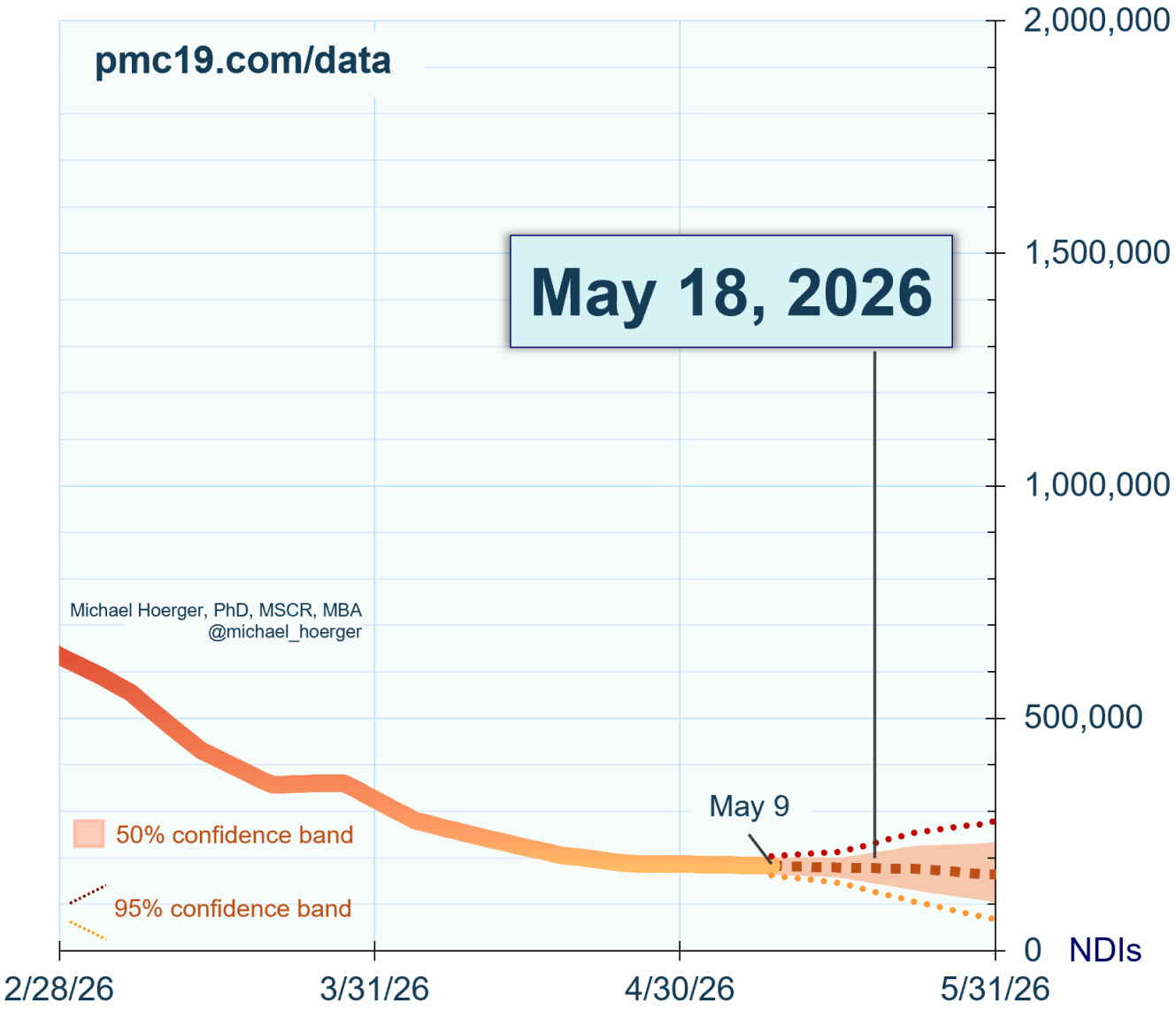
Current transmission is very low relative to the past 100 days, past year, and overall time span since pandemic onset.

SARS-CoV-2 Year-Over-Year Estimates of Transmission (U.S.)



Notice that will transmission is lower than in recent years and the median (gray line), levels have flatlined.

SARS-CoV-2 Transmission Forecast, Wastewater-Derived Estimates (U.S.)



The forecast is for stable transmission in a relative “lull” hovering just below 200,000 new daily infections.

A separate document called a Technical Appendix appears on the dashboard page and has more methodologic info. Search for key answers there first, and then send a public comment tagging Dr. H. on Twitter if further help is needed.